MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

MARCH 2002

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queer (kwer), *adj.*, **1.** strange or odd, from a conventional viewpoint; unusually different **2.** bad, worthless or counterfeit **3.** homosexual

punk (pungk), *n.*, **1.** a style or movement characterized by the adoption of aggressively unconventional and often bizarre or shocking clothing, hairstyles, makeup, etc., and the defiance of social norms of behavior, usually associated with punk rock musicians and fans **2.** something or someone worthless or unimportant **3.** a young homosexual

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL TOP 10

For what it's worth (not much), here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so...) lists of stuff we review.

ROB COONS

BETERCORE/OLHO DE GATO-split EP	V/A-New York Hardcore: The Way It Was-LP
SIN DIOS/APATIA NO-split EP	SKITSYSTEM-Enkel Resa Till Rännstenen-LP
SIN DIOS/CEMETERIO SHOW-split EP	TETSU ARREY-II-LP
JUSTICE LEAGUE-1983-1988-CD	THE LEWD-Live At The Mabuhay-LP
NINE SHOCKS TERROR-Zen & The Art-LP	RAMBO-live

ARWEN CURRY

NINE SHOCKS TERROR-Zen & The Art-LP	SIN DIOS/APATIA NO-split EP
KOYAANISQUATI-Lebenszustand-LP	ABE FROMAN-LP/FAGATRON-EP
PETROGRAD/DADDY LONGLEGS-split LP	POTOMAC-If We Take Notice Or Not-2xEP
SLUGGO-Contradictions-EP	THE SOUND OF FAILURE-Distress Signal-EP
DEAD ONES-Path Of The Majority-EP	SAWN OFF/UNKIND-split EP

JONATHAN FLOYD

NINE SHOCKS TERROR-Zen & The Art-LP	RAMBO/WHAT HAPPENS NEXT-live
STRIKE ANYWHERE-Underground-EP	F.D.S.-Planeta Terra S/A-LP
BELLTONES-Cheap Trinkets-LP	RADIO REELERS-Radio Feelin'-EP
SKITSYSTEM-Enkel Resa Till Rännstenen-LP	PETROGRAD/DADDY LONGLEGS-split LP
CRISPUS ATTUCKS/DE NADA-split EP	*SUBURBAN VOICE*-zine and comp CD

JEFF HEERMANN

'LIL BUNNIES- 50 Children's Favorites-LP	RADIO REELERS-Radio Feelin'-EP
LES SEXAREENOS-We Gonna Ball-EP	MUTANTS-Fun Terminal-CD
SLEEPERS-Seventh World-EP	REVILLOS-Totally Alive-CD
SLUGGO-Contradictions-EP	X-Live At The Civic '79-CD
WILDEBEESTS-1996-EP	SALEM LIGHTS-Barefoot In The Bathroom-45

TOM HOPKINS

POINT OF FEW/MIHOEN-split EP	BETERCORE/OLHO DE GATO-split EP
BELLTONES-Cheap Trinkets-LP	ONE MAN SHOW LIVE-Wrong-EP
DEAD ONES-EP/HOLDING ON-live	CRISPUS ATTUCKS/DE NADA-split EP
NINE SHOCKS TERROR-Zen & The Art-LP	LES SEXAREENOS-We Gonna Ball-EP
SKITSYSTEM-Enkel Resa Till Rännstenen-LP	STRIKE ANYWHERE-Underground-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

'LIL BUNNIES- 50 Children's Favorites-LP	ONE MAN SHOW LIVE-Wrong-EP
NAZIS FROM MARS/FOREHEADS-split EP	THE LEWD-Live At The Mabuhay-LP
RADIO REELERS-Radio Feelin'-EP	LES SEXAREENOS-We Gonna Ball-EP
HARD FEELINGS-Anytime I Want-EP	TAPEWORM-Break My Face-EP
WILDEBEESTS-1996-EP	*WISCONSIN DEATH TRIP*-film

DULCINEA LOUDMOUTH

ONE MAN SHOW LIVE-Wrong-EP	RADIO REELERS-Radio Feelin'-EP
V/A -New York Hardcore: The Way It Was-LP	THE LEWD-Live At The Mabuhay-LP
V/A-Before Birdmen Flew-LPs	LES SEXAREENOS-We Gonna Ball-EP
HARD FEELINGS-Anytime I Want-EP	WILDEBEESTS-1996-EP
LES SEXAREENOS-We Gonna Ball-EP	THE SAILORS-Violent Masturbation Blues-CD

RAY LUJAN

MUTANTS-CD/FURIOUS III-Is That You-CD	STRIKE ANYWHERE-Underground-EP
LAWRENCE ARMS-Apathy-CD	RADIO REELERS-Radio Feelin'-EP
THE PATTERN-45/MACH PELICAN-45	BELLTONES-LP/PEZZ-With Everything-LP
SPLODGENESSABOUNDS-CD	POCKET GENIUS-Tundra Rock-CD
NAZIS FROM MARS/FOREHEADS-split EP	TEACHERS PET-Jenny Superteen-EP

SUBSCRIPTIONS: (postpaid prices)
•US: $3 each. 6 issue sub for $18. If you're in California, send $19.49 (tax).
•Canada: $4 each (air) or $3 (surface). 6 issue sub for $24 (air) or $18 (surface). (US dollars)
•Mexico: $4.50 each (air) or $5 (surface). 6 issue sub for $27 (air) or $30 (surface).
•Western Europe: $8 each (air) or $4 (surface). 6 issue sub for $48 (air) or $24 (surface).
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•Everywhere else: $8 each (air) or $5.50 (surface). 6 issue sub for $48 (air) or $33 (surface).

Let us know which issue to start with!

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
Back issues #143, 146, 148, 150-153, 155-163, 165-181, 184-225 are as stated above in subscription info. See page after next.

DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Scene Reports: continuously, with photos!
Interviews: continuously, with photos!
Ad Reservations: call to make sure.
Ad Copy In (with payment): by 15th of previous month–NO LATER!!!
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1/6 page: (2 3/8" x 5") $25
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1/3 page square: (5" x 4 7/8") $80
1/2 page: (7 1/4" x 5") $125

AD CRITERIA:
We will not accept major label or related ads, or ads for comps or EPs that include major label bands. We reserve the right to refuse ads for any reason at any time. Send ads properly sized on paper.

CLASSIFIEDS: NEW PRICE! $2 for a maximum of 40 words. No racist, sexist or fascist material. Send typed if possible. Cash only!!! Expect a two month backlog!

COVER: Mike Thorn

SELL MRR AT GIGS: Within the US, we'll sell them to you at $1.50 each ppd, cash up front. Contact us for non-US orders. Must order five or more of the same issue.

STORES: If you have problems getting MRR from your distributors, try contacting Mordam Records at tel (916) 641-8900 or fax (916) 641-8889. Also available from: Dutch East, Get Hip, Smash, Subterranean, Last Gasp, See Hear, Cargo, Armadillo, Ubiquity, Choke Inc, Desert Moon, and Marginal.

Please send all records, zines, letters, articles, scene reports, photos, subscriptions, interviews, ads, etc., to:

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SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94146-0760
Phone (415) 923-9814
maximumrnr@mindspring.com
(use this mainly for comments & letters. Use phone for ads & other business stuff)

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible–one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only release. See records section for where to send tapes.

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

- V/A -New York Hardcore: The Way It Was-LP
- NINE SHOCKS TERROR-Zen & The Art-LP
- STRIKE ANYWHERE-Underground-EP
- SLUGGO-EP/PRETTYGIRLSMAKEGRAVES-live
- THE SOUND OF FAILURE-Distress Signal-EP
- FAGATRON-Sex For Warmth-EP
- YOUTH RIOT-Burn Glendora To The Ground-EP
- POTOMAC-2xEP/RAMBO-first 25 seconds live
- SCARE TACTIC-PS I Love You-EP
- SAWN OFF/UNKIND-split EP

WILLIE NELSON

- SIN DIOS/APATIA NO-split EP
- CRISPUS ATTUCKS/DE NADA-split EP
- SKITSYSTEM-Enkel Resa Till Rännstenen LP
- KOYAANISQUATI-Lebenszustand-LP
- EXEKUCE-Jak Dlouho Jeste...LP
- ABE FROMAN-LP
- CATHETER/SUTEKCONSPIRACY/TOTALLYRIDICULOUS-split CD
- CRUDE BE/RADIO SCHIZO-split LP
- WORLD CHAOS-Drink Positive-LP
- BG-live

DONNA POOLE

- FAGATRON-Sex For Warmth-EP
- CRUDE BE/RADIO SCHIZO-split LP
- ABE FROMAN-LP
- KOYAANISQUATI-Lebenszustand-LP
- SIN DIOS/APATIA NO-split EP
- PETROGRAD/DADDY LONGLEGS-split LP
- NINE SHOCKS TERROR-Zen & The Art-LP
- TETSU ARREY-II-LP
- ONE MAN SHOW LIVE-Wrong -EP
- RADIO REELERS-Radio Feelin'-EP

BRUCE ROEHRS

- BELLTONES-Cheap Trinkets-LP
- DEADLINE-More To It...Than Meets The Eye-CD
- RADIO REELERS-Radio Feelin'-EP
- DUAP-Solo Per Noi-CD
- WARRIOR KIDS-Discography-CD
- LOWER CLASS BRATS-Real Punk-LP
- THE INDEX-Indian Rock'n Roll-CD
- COLONNA INFLAME-Discography-CD
- V/A-Ego! Ego! Ego!-LP
- SUSPECT DEVICE-Boston Massacre-CD

MIKE THORN

- FDS-LP/KOYAANISQUATI-Lebenszustand-LP
- YOUTH RIOT-Burn Glendora To The Ground-EP
- SIN DIOS/APATIA NO-split EP
- WORLD CHAOS-LP/TETSU ARREY-II-LP
- ALARM/CHISPAS-split LP
- WLOCHATY-both CDs/DEAD ONES-EP
- SKITSYSTEM-LP/CRUDE BE/RADIO SCHIZO-split LP
- STRIKE ANYWHERE-Underground-EP
- DEVIL IS ELECTRIC-CD/ABE FROMAN-LP
- RAMBO/DEFIANCE/IRON LUNG/BG-live

RYAN WELLS

- DRID-Paid In Cunt-EP
- V/A-Before Birdmen Flew-LPs
- NAZIS FROM MARS/FOREHEADS-split EP
- LES SEXAREENOS-We Gonna Ball-EP
- 'LIL BUNNIES- 50 Children's Favorites-LP
- HARD FEELINGS-Anytime I Want-EP
- TEACHERS PET-Jenny Superteen-EP
- RADIO REELERS-Radio Feelin'-EP
- SLEEPERS-Seventh World-EP
- EASYS-live

KENNY KAOS/REMA YOUNG

- PUT ONS-A Differant Kind Of Single-EP
- TOYS THAT KILL/THE RAGIN' HORMONES-split EP
- RADIO REELERS-Radio Feelin'-EP
- THE PATTERN-She's A Libra/No Books-45
- BELLTONES-Cheap Trinkets-LP
- V/A-Ego! Ego! Ego!-LP
- LES SEXAREENOS-We Gonna Ball-EP
- MACH PELICAN-Airport/Last Night-45
- THE CARBURETORS-Burning Rubber-EP
- THE HARD FEELINGS-Anytime I Want-EP

ZINE TOP TEN

- America? #9
- Chickenhead Zine and Roll #3
- Fresh Rag #2
- Freak Tension #6
- Green Anarchy #7
- Oblivion #10
- Pick Your Poison #2
- 3rd Generation Nation #22
- Trash Faction #3
- Trust #91

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#143/Apr '95. Vindictives, Stinkerbell, Jesus Christ Superfly, New Day, Registrators, Youth Brigade, Pit.

#146/July '95. Riverdales, Head, Bristles, Aut Aut, Schleprock, Spanakorzo, McRackins, YAPO, 10-96, Empress Of Fur, Underhand, Nailed Down.

#148/Sept '95. Soda Jerks, Toe Rag, Thorazine, Scared Straight, Wizo, Opposition Party, Moody Jackson, Adversives, Opcion Crucial, Rebel Rebel, Teen Idols, Walking Ruins.

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#152/Jan '96. Delilah Jacks, Battalion of Saints, Bottom Feeders, Turbonegro, Murder Junkies, Junior, Assfort, Retch Records, Com-Fract, Dead End Kids.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#155/Apr '96. Hockey Teeth, Turnips, Pussy Crush, Cro-Mags, High Plains Drifters, Slight Slappers, Third Degree, Anti-Flag.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#157/June '96. Against All Authority, The Criminals, Wardance, Heroines, Brain Brats, Rudiments, Chinese Millionaires, Sons Of Hercules, Your Mother, Yellow Scab.

#158/July '96. Workin' Stiffs, The Gain, Ashley Von Hurter, Haters, The Process, Brother Inferior, Judge Nothing, Break-ups, Not For Rent.

#159/Aug '96. Smugglers, Brand New Unit, Tone Deaf Pig-Dogs, Round Ear Spocks, David Hayes/Very Small Recs, Man Afraid, Blind Side, Vox Populi, Death Wish Kids, Fun People, Fat Drunk & Stupid.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, The Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemption 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#165/Feb '96. Blanks '77, Emily's Sassy Lime, Real Mckenzies, Millionaires, Dropkick Murphys, No-Talents, Hives, Sea Monster, He's Dead Jim, Defiance, Bou Sou Nezumi, Freeze.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#167/Apr '97. Grand Theft Audio, No Fraud, Gauze, Nobodys, Sloppy Seconds, Danko Jones, Viceroys, Forgotten.

#168/May '97. Cretin 66, Fishsticks, UK Subs, Distemper, Enewetak, Fields Of Shit.

#169/June '97. Hand Skin, Cluster Bomb Unit, Jihad, Purgen, Speed Queens, Remission, Halflings, The Old Man, Deface.

#170/July '97. Bristle, Mine, Tedio Boys, The 4 Cockroaches, Absconded, Meanwhile. Broken, (Young) Pioneers, Hoodrat.

#171/Aug '97. Strychnine, Idiots, Pelado Recs, Misanthropists, Racetraitor, Violent Society, Knuckleheads.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#173/Oct '97. Hot Water Music, Fat Day, Los Tigres Guapos, Les Partisans, Bristols, My 3 Scum, Space Shits, Pessimiser Recs, Reclusives, Nick Qwik.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#176/Jan '97. Scared of Chaka, Voorhees, Stalingrad, Upstairs People, Squid Boy, Izgoy, Beltones, Sky Grain, 1,4,5s, Ducky Boys, JCCCamp.

#177/Feb '98. Superfly TNTs, Submachine, Dropout, Society Gone Madd, Pinhead Circus, Ann Beretta, Blackbird, Naive, Useless ID, Quarantine.

#178/Mar '98. Economics issue. Forgotten Rebels, Dirtys, Josh Collins, American Steel, Letterbombs, Gyogun Rend's, Go-Devils, Room 41, Tone Deaf Pig Dogs, Garage Rats

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, Stiletto Boys, All Bets Off, Bonecrusher, Summerjack, Cell Blck 5, DDI, Normals, Pirate Radio issue.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Mauraunders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#211/Dec '00. Fly & Seth Toboeman, Anti/Dogmatikss, Hissyfits, Aus Rotten, Media Blitz, Rocks, Hospital Food, Falsies, White Stripes, 9 Shocks Terror, Tijuana Bibles.

#212/Jan '00. Avail, Born Dead Icons, From Ashes Rise, the Voids, the Guilty Pleasures, xLimpwristx, Chachi on Acid.

#213/Feb '01. Fun People, Onward to Mayhem, Ugly Pop, Midnight Evils, Atrocious Madness, Bread & Water, Josh Peach, Zodiac Killers.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum, Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Primer on Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb. '02 Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, ScrotumGrinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

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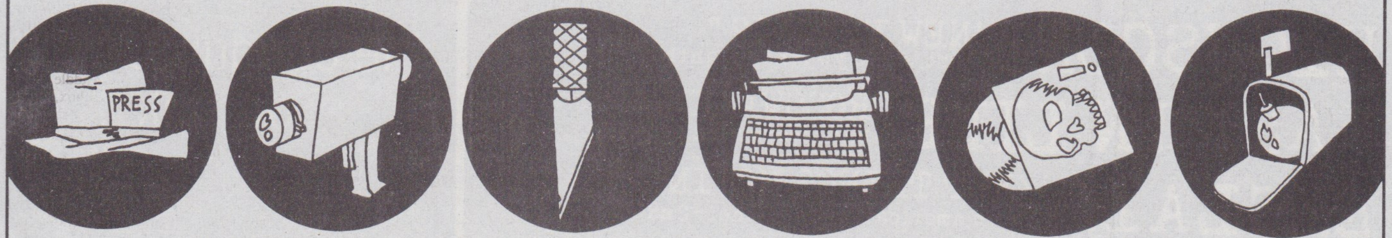

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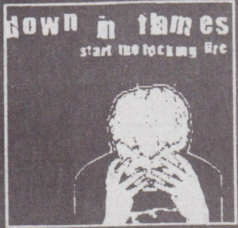

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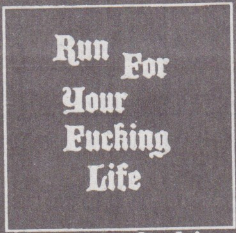

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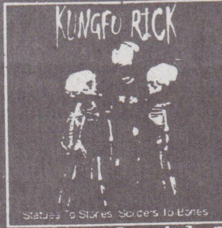

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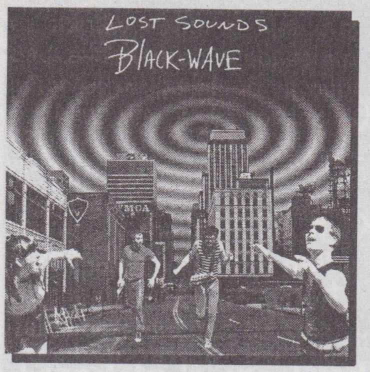
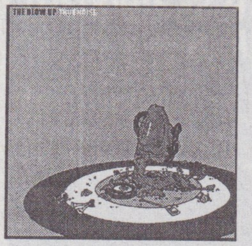


Lost Sounds

Black Wave CD/Double LP

Here it is, Black Wave, the follow up to 2000's album of the year "Memphis Is Dead" on Big Neck. This record is going to, and has, annihilated every formerly-emo-now-we're-into-New-Order-instruction-manual bullshit to come down the pike using their emaciated frames to try and flaccidly dry-hump their Casios into your heart. Band contains Alicja (CLEARS, FITTS), Jay & Rich (REATARDS).



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Seattle distortionists, The Blow Up, again teaming up with movement leader Tim Kerr, has graced us with a twelve song mindbender that states its point with urgent accuracy. Toiling away at machines of their own construction, the group has manufactured a compact tool for aural disintegration and a strident wake up call to the nostalgic flock of baying sheep steadfastly refusing to acknowledge their existence in the moment that is RIGHT FUCKING NOW!

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Dead Moon

Trash & Burn LP/CD

Yes, finally a new Dead Moon CD! After spending much of last year touring the US including a rousing show at The Vegas Shakedown, Dead Moon went home and turned out this gem. Dead Moon is fronted by Fred Cole, a living rock-n-roll legend (check out The Lollipop Shoppe)

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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to maximumrnr@mindspring.com. No response guaranteed.

Attn: queer punk issue!!!

My name is Natasha. I write for *Skiteater* fanzine and Misanthrope webzine. I also played in Skullkrusher (r.i.p.). I play currently in Anticharge and the Holy Whores. I consider myself pretty active in the d.i.y. "scene." I'm a 20 year old bisexual black female. In a "scene" that so prides itself on unity & diversity & acceptance, I feel quite left out. It seems as though "gay's OK" only if you sing political songs about your sexuality & do a whole zine about it. Otherwise, d.i.y. means "doesn't include you." My zine is overlooked often because we include nude pictures of women, on the supposition that such images are "sexist" and "demeaning." Although our issue #2 included my column explaining how I feel about porn & its actual relation to punk, I guess lots of people just ignored the fact that I even mentioned.

When Skullkrusher played shows lots of girls would come up front and watch us. Those same girls ignored the band before I was in it. It is quite apparent that many women only go see bands with women in them, not bothering to listen to the music. I couldn't tell you how many females would be up front cheering and shaking their fists while I played that would never buy a tape & couldn't name one song. It's quite embarrassing. Maybe the d.i.y. scene has just become what my friend once called "a low budget gay dating service." No one cares that I'm a bi woman in a d-beat band, just that I'm a bi woman. And they get mad that I don't force my male, straight singer to scream about the trouble of being a bi woman.

The whole "scene" is backwards. Instead of embracing diversity, we're imposing PC fascism. How revolting. Don't you people know that gay fascism is just as wrong as homophobic fascism and that by enforcing political correctness that you just push away people who might otherwise listen to your ideas. "If it's queer and punk we want it!" How about "if it is good we want it" or "if you put a lot of hard work into it we want it?" It's almost enough to push people back into the closet, or at least out of d.i.y.

Natasha/ 152 Gostlin/ Hammond, IN 46327

Dear MRR,

I'm Marvin Whittaker. I'm a 34 y.o. queer punk from Carbondale, Illinois. Currently I am trying to form a glam band and I hope to be managing an up & coming local band, the Fighting 407th.

I think it's great to do a queer/punk issue, not to single us out but to give us q.p.s a way to bond. I have met many queer punks over the years and it's a great scene for anyone to be in. It's unfortunate drugs and discrimination have tried to destroy the punk scene but we can all bond together in unity for the preservation of all. I am so proud of all the young punks for keeping the scene alive to give outsiders a place to belong to. We are all a little odd, but for myself and many others being queer as well, it seems twice as hard to fit in. The punk scene is very welcoming and open minded but it can be a lonely place sometimes. I see young cute guys that I think are hot, but they aren't queer and I guess it can be frustrating to be attracted to someone you can't approach. I don't want to be shunned by my peers. I don't consider myself to be "gay." I hate that fucking term, too many feminine implications associated with that word. I have male friends who consider themselves to be "gay" and they go to dance clubs, raves, wear Tommy Hilfiger and all that other stuff. There's nothing wrong with that, except when people lump me in with the "gay" scene. I'm homosexual, yes, but I love punk rock, heavy metal, working on cars, camping and most people don't know I'm queer unless I tell them. People always say "I couldn't tell, you don't act like one." I love to hear that, when people are *not* politically correct with me, it shows acceptance kind of like "you're cool, I can joke around with you and you don't act like a bitch about it." I will kick somebody's ass though if they got in my face and said "you're a fucking faggot." I don't like being threatened and I'll let someone know if they're crossing a boundary. I have *never* directly had *any punk* since 1978 ever get in my face for being a queer. I love the acceptance the hetero punks give to me and I respect their opinions (or at least their right to have them).

I went to a show in Nashville, Tenn. once, and I saw two young boys probably 15 or 16 holding hands at a show, I thought that was so cool that these two young punks cared for each other and could express that without fear. I started a punk club in Paducah, Kentucky (311 Indie Rock Cafe) and had several queer punks in their teens come in and make friends, start bands and participate in the club's events just like everybody else. It's great that nobody cares about your sexual preference (well most people don't care) and appreciate when you're honest about who you are with them. I have heard other queer punks say that they are glad to have a scene they feel they belong to. Gay bars, cruise-y parks and most of the support groups for queers suck so bad that those places make you feel even more alone and depressed. I have learned that by making my own scene happen, I can have a full and active life on my own terms and not someone else's. Queers are everywhere in the punk scene; on stage, in the audience, making records, owning businesses and supporting the scene in general. I hope that more people come out of the closet in the future and realize that all you have to be is yourself, fuck what other people think. If you are

already out and don't like the stereotypical "gay" scene, truly be open-minded and go to a hall show or punk club and see what it's all about. If you are a punk and are afraid that other punks will reject you, I hope you can find the courage to say "fuck it" and be yourself. That is truly the only definition I know for the word punk, just learn how to say "fuck it" and be yourself. One more thing, be careful of religious groups, cults are not the answer. You can use religion to enhance your spiritual beliefs, but never be a follower. Sorry for the shitty handwriting and poor journalist skills. *Maximum* rocks. Sincerely yours,

Marvin Whittaker/ PO Box 732/ Brookport, IL 62910

Hey -

Are you a queer punk, crusty, radical, anarchist, freak, nomad, outlaw, gender queer, men and womyn – you get the point? I'm looking to start a communication network for the "outcasts" of the gay & lesbian scene. If you are interested e-mail me, and I'll distribute copies to everybody listing each individual's contact address (snail mail or email) and some of their interests. Let the communication begin! Too cheap for a classified,

Autonomous_1@hotmail.com

PS Are any of you in the South?

MRR,

Hey, Neil from *Weiner Society* writing to say I heard about the cool ass review you guys tossed me in #223, what can I say? Thank you for the unending support, I've gotten nothing but a strong helping hand & a constant "go get 'em tiger" from you die hards. From the beginning of my drastic life transformation two years ago when I faced the facts of the lie I had been living as a member of a Nazi gang in prison and all the other fucked up shit I was dealing with inside my twisted & self-oppressed being, you helped me voice my turmoil. You gave me a chance in the prisoner's column to spill my guts & own up to my tragic mistakes & let me get word to kids, the scene and a lot of caring people that change, through truth and ideals, is never impossible to clutch. I've found healing, self-forgiveness & truth. Love & dedication to finding purpose can & will always conquer hate, ignorance or fear. My life is proof.

I'm connecting with tons of kids through opening my life & telling the truth. It's *not* about slogans, it's not about reputation, it's not about image; it's about us, the people who can't accept the lies we're fed by this society & its teachers and upholders, it's about finding that molten inner core & realizing *that's who I* am & seeing the same in all the eyes you look into. Stripping down & learning to *love* the beauty that is all our ugliness.

Anyway... the zine is coming along. Thanks to everyone I met & bonded with through the column. I've built a new family through those bonds, fallen in love with a miraculous girl, got a long-distance boyfriend too, made best friends & found gems of d.i.y. punkrockin' activists that I'm livin' out my transition with & doin' it together.

Thanks for all the support. I'll never forget how you helped form my foundation. That's real. Now this may all seem like cheesy la-la shit, but being in prison & being active in the d.i.y. community isn't easy with a repressive force that *hates* seeing a motherfucker take their life into their own hands, get posi & start making waves & promoting motherfuckers to do some evaluating & find some truth & reason.

So all the aid I get I am full of gratitude for & humbled that me, a geeky ex-image whore, recovered junky, crustpowerthrashemostreet-grindpop fiend, half-fag tat boy has found a place to impact something or someone, even if it's just the girl in Canada with no friends, always getting kicked out of school & forced on psych medication who somehow relates to what I've got to say & now has *one* friend to talk to, or the kid in Cleveland that lived a lie too, a different one than mine, & finally found someone to unload to. Or the boy that went through a childhood of molestation & reading about mine finally fucking cried it out, all those years later. Or the few kids that came out about same-gender attractions to me first, cuz *I came out to them* about being bi through some photocopied pages. To anyone out there doubting... we make a fucking difference. I'll *be* that sucker for idealistic dorkiness, if it means touching another kid like me. So, enough babbling... All those that have helped, thanks, & I'll repay it all.

As bombs drop & lives end & our political fears manifest before our eyes, let's join our fucking hands & grab each other in one big embrace. The nation is unifying behind *their* sick blindness, let us finally unify, without the buzz slogan, bullshit fakeness, behind our clarity of true-to-what-matters... helping each other make life happen *our way*. I'm done puking up "posi" lingo. Fuck shit up! In solidarity,

Neil Wiener

To the writers of MRR,

I enjoy reading the columns. I would like to give a suggestion for future articles. I would like to learn prison survival skills. There should be a description on how to deal with guards, inmates, wardens, etc. There should also be articles on how to make drugs, alcohol, weapons, medicine. Please ask your writers to write this. From,

Eve Asherberg

Hello,

Here is Checho from Natural Mystic, in my neighborhood the situation is OK! But all the supermarkets are closed because the owners thinks they can be ransacked, there some police cars in the streets but we can see some tranquility in the people (not violent attitude)... Another thing is all the people is recovering their money from the banks because the rumors of devaluation is *very big*... In the center of the city (the downtown) is like the *far west*... A lot of police, police trucks... eh... a lot of riots in the night... all the fronts of the banks are broken, there were like 3 or 4 punk guys died in the struggle with the military in the 'Plaza de Mayo' zone... A lot of cars burned, eh... a horrible situation. I think I'll travel to Europe in the middle of January, I'll fly with my girlfriend Alejandra (she's from Bogota, Colombia, anarchopunk, she sung in a anarchopunk band called Excomulgados). Well that's all. Salute to all the friends in the USA.

Checho/ Natural Mystic, Actitud Mental Positiva Discos/ 720°/ www.ampdiscos.com.ar

To Erin Yanke,

Hi, my name is Rupert from the band Eskapo outta Vallejo, CA. I just wanted to say, after reading all the columns and news in MRR about 9/11, that I completely agree with what you had to say, there is a considerable difference in the way Muslims and other Middle-Eastern people are treated in our country. Flags raised left and right are starting to make me weary and nervous because three members of my band (including me) are still citizens of the Philippines and none of us are gung-ho about the way the American government is handling the situation. A good example would be the reopening of US naval bases in the Philippines.

The US says it's just for the ships and planes to refuel and gather supplies, but what of the MNLF (Moro National Liberation Front), a fanatical faction of Islamic Filipinos from the southern islands of Mindanao that have been waging a war of decades on the Catholics/Filipino government. I am sure the MNLF would not hesitate to attack US soldiers and those who support them or innocent bystanders. Also in the past in the 70's or 80's when US navel bases were in the Philippines, a lot of US soldiers would take Filipino women who were poor as mistresses then they would leave them with Ameri-Asian children who would never know their fathers because they returned to their real families.

I don't know the answers and this is my first letter to anyone in MRR in all my years into this punk thing but I felt I needed to express my opinion to someone. I mourn the loss of America but I just wish people would stop hurting each other. Thanx,

Rupert/ eskapo@hotmail.com

PS Eskapo lyrics are in Tagalog (Filipino) but we are a multi-racial band, not just a Filipino band.

Hi,

I was just reading the Jan MRR letter column and thought I would add my 2 cents to the conversation about discographies and bootlegs. "Phil McCrackin" must have got misquoted when he said "...isn't it counterproductive to include exclusive unreleased tracks that long-time fans who have all the records would want to hear?" *What?* That's the whole purpose of discographies, to include everything the band has done. The previously unavailable, demo, and alternate versions of songs are the icing on the cake. Those, along with linear notes, photos and lyrics are what sell most discographies. Especially today when most people have 99% of a bands releases, discographies are more for convenience. Besides, the CD is the perfect format for a discography, and if the space is available it might as well be utilized (the Charles Bronson disco being guilty of abuse of this format!)

I've always been a supporter of bootlegs, that is until I read Max Ward's response to Greg Garltand's letter. I never realized all the money that was made off of these things, especially in light of the fact that *no* artistic effort (or pressing/studio) cost goes into them. Not to mention that no effort is taken to ask the bands permission, which would only end up making a better record. The stance I always had was that if the bands had no interest in making out of print releases available again, then let the bootleggers do it. At least then the music gets heard! I still feel this way to some extent, especially in cases of bands who talk of their "message" as gospel in interviews, and then release one sided square shaped picture disc 6"s limited to 138 copies. The "message" may be important but collectability takes the front seat.

The best bootlegs are always discography CDs anyway, and I think I speak for most people when I say that I'd rather buy a legit collection than a booted one, but there not always available. The Slap-a-ham discography of Crossed Out blows any boot out of the water, and I understand that a legit Infest one is in the works. Hopefully some day the members of Disrupt will put out a collection, 'til then I recommend the boot collection that's out on CD now. It's reasonably priced, includes all the goods and is well put together. But this leaves countless other bands who have awesome early stuff or sometimes complete catalogs that are unobtainable except through e-bay. So either pay through the nose or go without.

I now understand that some booters have less than honest intentions, and that fucking sucks, but I'm still glad to have a boot LP of the early Amebix 7"s. Who knows if that stuff will ever get a proper re-release? I'm wasting space at this point so I'll wrap it up by stating that boots sell because there is a demand, so bands take note! Keep the $$$ out of the booters hands and give the fans what they want!

Steve Feltner/ ferenzy@aol.com

PS I totally agree with "McCrackin" about the Tear It Up 7". I've heard those songs and they are too good for only 300 people to hear. if the band is listening-put those songs on the end of your next CD!

Hey Robert and MRR,

When you sent me my last zine you asked me to give you some insight on punk rock in St. Louis, well here it is.

It fucking sucks! There's lots of disunity amongst punks. And it really bothers me. I work for a label called Vizual Records so I listen to all types of punk. Because of this, whenever I go to a show, I get looked upon differently by my fellow punks. Sure, there's places like the Creepy Crawl and www.stlpunk.com to unite but that's it. There's lots of bands from the St. Louis area but as the Teflon Dons guitarist said "any kid with a guitar can have a band." And that's true. You never hear many good bands from St. Louis. Probably due to the fact that we get overrun so to speak. There's always lots of tours but do they ever stop in St. Louis? Of course not. If only people had any idea of how many punks would show up at their shows here.

One day I was on stlpunk.com and I was reading Bomb Guam's message board. I was shocked by what people say about them. They try as hard, if not harder, then any other band in St. Louis. What the hell is wrong with St. Louis? I see more people at the less talented bands' shows then at very good bands' shows. But I guess that almost shows unity in the sense that people are going to shows uniting with people to listen to what they love, punk rock music.

Everything isn't bad here though. St. Louis has its good punk spots, like University City. There's always punk rock kids there like my bud Jennifer who works at Vintage Vinyl.

Her idea was to change the whole store into all punk CDs and vinyl. They do put on shows there every once in a while but she wanted more shows.

I'm not sure what else I have to write. I don't have any interviews for you but I'll try to get you some. Cool zine, keep it up.
Mark Drago/ Vizual Records

MRR -

Well, the electric bill is past due, they took my digital cable away. I haven't paid my car insurance so my license is probably suspended, my cell phone got shut off, I haven't paid my credit card bill in like 3-4 months, I haven't gotten a tattoo in months, I hardly ever go anywhere anymore except to go to work or to cop dope, and I've sold a lot of my belongings... even my soul—if I have one. I am losing everything to this—this demon, this vice, this evil, evil thing... this fucked up overpowering drug. I am too smart for this, how could I let this, err, do this to myself? I am smarter than this drug! *Fuck!!!* I can't believe this... I am your classic, full-blown "junky". *Ooh*, I hate that word. That word is disgusting!

Why am I writing this letter? You may be wondering. To tell you the truth... I'm not really sure. Maybe because it's Sunday and I'm really depressed right now, but no more than any other day. Maybe it's because I am trying to glorify heroin... *Wrong* again. I would have to say, probably to warn people about this fucked up drug.

I'm sure you've all heard about it. I'm sure you all have a pretty good idea of how fucked up heroin is and what it does to people. I steal and I never used to. You have to if your habit is bigger than your paycheck, otherwise you get sick, and fear of getting sick is why 99.9% of "junkies" are "junkies." But you'll never really completely understand until you go through (and I hope with all my heart you never do) what I'm going through right now. (There is a good book called "The Heroin User's Handbook" by Francis Moraes, PhD that gives you a pretty good idea and it is very well written. I want to write a book about my experiences with heroin. I'll let you know when I do. "Junky" by William Burroughs is very good also.)

I said this would *never* happen to me, but I played with the drug more than I should have and now I've dug a hole so deep you couldn't hear me crying and screaming if you were standing at the top looking down. "Down" is really where I am right now... in every sense of the word!

I was reading MRR and felt compelled to write a letter. A lot of people write stupid, pointless letters and some people write cool letters that really get me thinking. I hope this letter gets you thinking. I would never wish this "lifestyle" of mine on my worst enemy. I'm stuck here and I can't "see the light at the end of the tunnel." This is not a "woe-is-me" letter. I've been meaning to write a letter to the zine I buy and read every month and this is just what was on my mind when I finally got around to it. If you didn't already, hopefully you won't think of *all* junkies as "scumbags" now. I don't consider myself a "scumbag:" I don't steal from my friends, I don't sell my body, I take showers. I haven't reached rock bottom yet and those three things will never describe me so have a little compassion and think about this: your best friend could be a "junky" and you may not even realize it! Punk will never die.
From Miami

PS If you want to talk, my email is chaoskat333@hotmail.com.

Arwen & Mike—

I would like to go on record as supporting your decision to pull the TKO "Bodies" ad. While I think the statement "Firepower is our business" is a pretty apt slogan for the US government (though I'd argue that America has diversified its business), being familiar with the Bodies work, I can only think that the slogan, combined with the image of an American flag, is a patriotic, or even nationalist, comment. And post-9/11, I think you are right figuring the ad to be supportive of the Kick Some Ass line. I do not think that anyone, including TKO would argue that point.

The message of the ad being what it is, I would say that to run the ad would be akin to running a paid editorial, different only in content than the Kitchen Table Press ads Tim Yo used to run in the 80s (a combo of ad and editorial comment from a left point of view). Looking at things this way, it is ridiculous to assume that MRR would have any interest running such an ad (even if the ultimate aim of the ad is to sell records).

MRR is a publication. It's editors are the people in control of the content of the magazine, no one else. This does not go against any principle of free speech. You are not stopping TKO or the Bodies or speaking their mind. Sure, they can't do it in MRR, but MRR is not theirs. They are not responsible for it. Just because they have cash to pay for an ad does not guarantee them anything. Perhaps, TKO and the Bodies might offer their inner sleeve to MRR so that MRR can publish an anti-nationalist statement in *their* forum. MRR can even pay for the *privilege*. Of course this is not going to happen. TKO and the Bodies would be idiotic to do so. The Bodies are not going to compromise any of their "artistic" space so a bunch of Commies can fly their freak flag, even if it is for money, nor should they. That would be the ultimate sell out. Nor would anyone expect TKO to put out a release by say some really lame funk metal band, just because the lame funk metal band was paying them to do so. TKO would never do that because it would ruin their rep two ways: It would send a message that they can be bought off, and they would have something that they hated on their label. In other words, they own their label, just as the Bodies own their band, and MRR is "owned" by its editors and its shit workers.

Anyway, I thought I'd send you this note of support. Keep up the good work. In solidarity against the rat bastard who are trying to bum our trip... or something like that,
Scott Soriano

senneval.

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OUT DEC/JAN/FEB

HHH - 2xCD Discography (repress)
The complete collection of this Spanish thrashcore band. One of my favorites.

CRUCIAL ATTACK - Debut EP
Raw as fuck SXE HC from Reno. No polish here....pissed off and punk.

BG - Debut EP
500 press run of ex-BURNED UP BLED DRY guys playing grinding German style HC.

ExTxA - We're not the...CD
Collection of the first LP, debut EP and comp tracks/unreleased. Fierce Swedish HC.

BREAKFAST - Eat Rice EP
The 2nd EP by Tokyo skate-thrash kings. Recorded like new EXCLAIM stuff...ripping.

DOWN IN FLAMES - LP/CD
Debut LP of high energy thrash from kids who are half your age. CD has extra.

IRON LUNG - EP
Two man grindcore attack. Crazy time changes & off chords at 1000mph

SCHOLASTIC DETH - Revenge EP
7 new fast HC songs about skating, books and the joys of being a nerd. Lets GO!

DISCARGA - LP/CD
Ultra fast political HC from Brazil...like MANLIFTINGBANNER. Collection of sorts.

V/A - Barbaric Thrash Vol III CD+EP
Shitloads of new thrash bands from all over the world plus a crazed ASOCIAL demo EP.

LIE - Why EP
LIE return to their no-BS fast thrash roots. 4 new ones for the west coast tour.

REAGAN SS - EP
Pissed LA hardcore....flex your fucking head!

QUATTRO STAGIONE - Debut EP
Crazed German grindcore....like HE WHO CORRUPTS. Drummer is smoking mad crack.

YOUTH ENRAGE - MCD
Crazed fast core from Sapporo! Third outing..includes CD-Rom video of 2 shows.

Ebullition distro's 625 shirts as well. Check either website

6X2X5 thrashcore

EPS STILL AVAILABLE:

THE REAL ENEMY - EP
Positive, political and fast youth crew from Minneapolis. Their last record

FACE OF CHANGE-1990 Demo 2xEP
Combo of raw HC and melody not unlike early 7 SECONDS and UNIFORM CHOICE. 90 demo.

JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS - Debut EP
1000 more of this now legendary band. Osaka's version of early GANG GREEN.

SCHOLASTIC DETH - Debut EP
Fast skate-thrash that is inspired by HERESY and HENSLEY. 6 songs in 6 minutes.

EDORA - Debut EP
Ripping fast thrash/grind from Singapore. FxOxB meets POWER OF IDEA

POINT OF FEW - EP
Political, powerful Dutch hardcore that mixes thrash and modern HC styles

BREAKFAST - Debut EP
Debut of Tokyo skate thrash. Mix SST with manic and fierce thrash!

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LPS/CDS STILL AVAILABLE:

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Mix FINAL EXIT (Swe) and PROJECT X, throw in some fatigues and a huge mosh pit and you have fucking RAMBO. Cd-rom video too!

IMMORTAL FATE - Beautiful LP
Brutal, guttural grindcore not unlike the first INCANTATION LP. Pre-NO LESS members.

REAL REGGAE - MAZE + THC CD
Guitar heavy thrashcore from Osaka Japan. Compiles Eps, comps and the Maze CD on MCR!

V/A - Murderous Grind Attack CD
An American/Japanese 17 band CD comp of brutal, DIY grindcore. Not for math-metal wimps, this is as raw as it gets.

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS - LP
Insane hardcore that is like a mix between BLAST! and MAN IS THE BASTARD (I swear).

LIE - LP / CD
LIE continue with their fierce thrash and throw in some snotty punk to boot

GORDON SOLIE MOFOs 10"LP
Finally back in print, definitive Midwest pissed-off hardcore/punk.

DUMBSTRUCK - LP
Ex-RIPCORD playing some rough and raw Scandanavian inspired hardcore

HIGHSCORE - Discography CD
Super fast youth crew from Germany. Contains the LP, EP, comp tracks and demo

PLUTOCRACY - Dankstahz CD
Collection spanning 89-93. Out of control grindcore, splits, LP, live, etc.

LIFES HALT/WxHxN - Split LP/CD
Been in the works for years, finally happening in support of the US Summer Tour!

WxHxN - The Second Year CD
The 6", Japan Tour Ep, and the 'Ahora Mas Que Nunca' EP, plus some other surprises!

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AVULSION - CD
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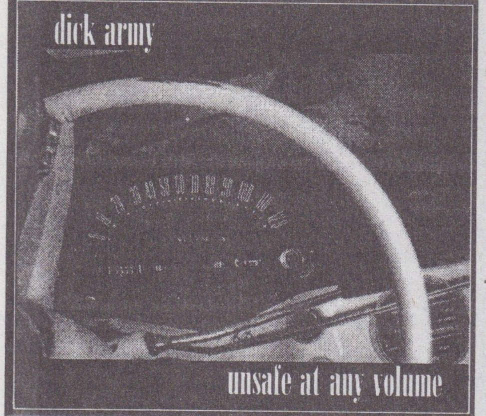

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2464...AFI-A Fire Inside 7" EP...$4.00
6688...OPERATION: CLIFF CLAVIN-When Everythings Been Said Double CD...$9.50
2365CD...REDS-It's About Time CD...$11.00/ LP...$9.50(cat#2280LP)
2916...BREAD AND WATER/REASON OF INSANITY-Split 7" EP...$4.50
6892...ANTISCHISM-Still Life CD...$10.50
2286...DEFIANCE-No Time 7"EP...$5.00
6644...AUS ROTTEN-...And Now Back To Our Programming CD...$12.50
6463...OI POLLOI-Fight Back CD...$16.00
5798...LOS CRUDOS/SPITBOY-Viviendo Asperamente/Roughly Living split LP...$7.50
3140...SOOPHIE NUN SQUAD-Dino 7" EP...$3.50
7610...ANGEL HAIR-Pregnant with the Senior Class CD...$10.50
2356CD...RIP OFFS-Got A Record CD...$12.00
2398CD...LOS CRUDOS-Discography CD...$12.50
4348...LOCUST/MAN IS THE BASTARD-Split 10"...$8.50
2965...WHITE STRIPES-Hello Operator b/w Jolene 7"...$4.00
2966...ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN-New York Knights b/w Already Dead 7"...$4.50
2259LP...CRIMSON CURSE-Both Feet in the Grave LP...$9.00
1384LP...SCROTUM GRINDER-The Greatest Sonic Abomination Ever LP...$9.00
1380LP...WHITE STRIPES-White Blood Cells LP...$9.00
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1357LP...ZOUNDS-Curse Of Zounds & Singles 2XLP...$14.00
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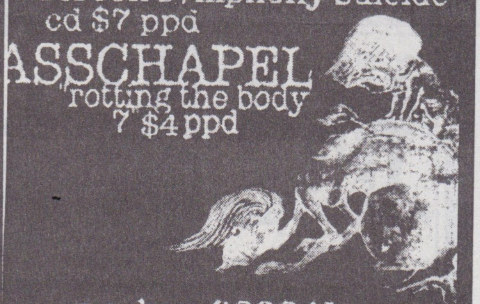

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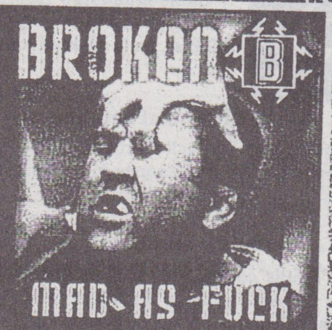

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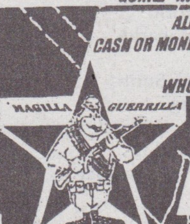

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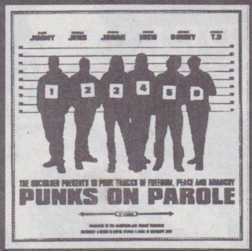

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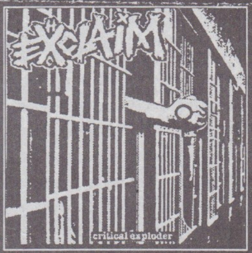

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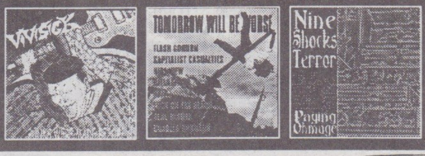

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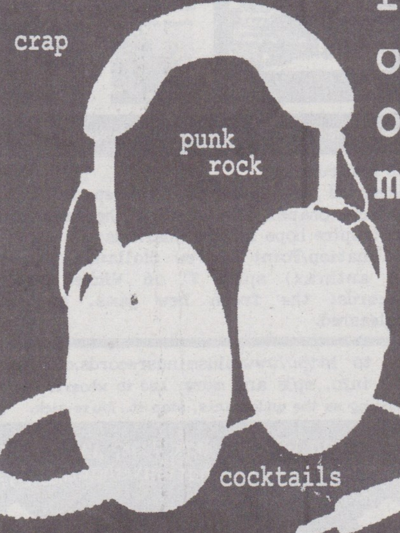

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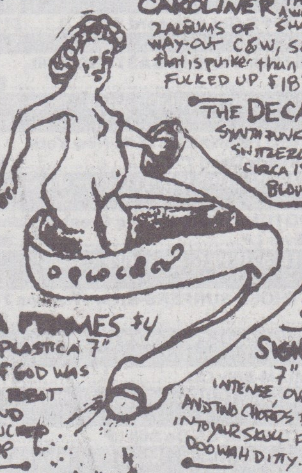

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COLUMNS

"Geeeee-hod! Geeeee-hod!" yells this insanely loud voice, as my forehead lays firmly on the hand-carved wooden trim of the bar at Mars.

"Geeee-hod!" it repeats over and over as I try to keep my eyes closed as tight as possible, and also keep all the Jose Cuervo, Rolling Rock, and vodka and cranberry down below my teeth.

"Geeee-hod!" the man yells louder, as the words echo and bounce around inside my already fried brain, filled with images of the Twin Towers crashing down outside my window, a mere five short blocks from my living room.

Inside my brain I hear Wendy yelling, "Oh my God, Oh my God! A plane just hit the twin tower!" I look out the window after hearing a screaming noise so loud that pictures of our deceased parents have fallen off our walls and shelves.

Sure enough there's a hole in the building, which begins to burn like the top of a cigarette.

"Geeee-Hod!" the voice echoes, as I remember watching people of all walks of life jump from the heat and smoke to their untimely deaths. Couples holding hands. Women and their children. Men on fire.

"Geee-Hod!" as a second plane hits, and no one knows what to do.

"Geee-Hod!" as Wendy, P.J. and I flee, as a cloud larger than Godzilla chases us up Broadway.

"Geeee-Hod!" as I found myself back at Mars Bar, about two months later, still trying to make sense of, well, anything.

*

I think it was the blow-job that started it all. A very natural act. A nice pair of firm Jewish lips around the penis of some guy. Some guy who just happened to be the President Of The United States.

When caught, he lies about it.

Who wouldn't?

For this, he's not only tried and convicted by both congress *and* the media, he's impeached. The President Of The United States. Impeached for a blow job.

"Geeee-Hod!"

I remember Nick, my stepfather, as well as my brother Seth, telling me that this was a very important time in history. One that we are lucky to live through, so we can tell our grandchildren. Remembering Nixon's resignation speech, I nod my head and say nothing. It was a blow job.

Then there's the presidential election. Two scumbags running against one another. One of the scumbags, the now fat and bearded one, has a wife that really screwed with freedom of speech back in the 80s, and helped land me in the slammer a few times. The other guy, if put in a leather jacket and sunglasses, could pass for the Furious George monkey on the cover of any of my albums.

So they both run against each other, and the counting of votes takes weeks. It all comes down to the Satan State itself, Floriduh. A place that long ago should have been severed from this country and given to Cuba in exchange for the legal import of better cigars.

"Geeee-Hod!"

Again, Nick tells me this is a very important time in history, and something I'll likely never see again. My brother says the same thing, as well as the media, and everyone I meet on the street.

"Can you believe an election has come down to this?" they'd ask.

I was still thinking about the blow job.

Then comes September 11.

Awakened by a screeching whine, Wendy screaming, the dog barking, and a tremendous blast, I see my worst fears come to life.

When I moved to Tribeca over five years ago, and noticed that the Twin Towers stood like two monoliths from *2001* right outside my window, I thought to myself, "It would really suck if those things fell. Because, if they did, they'd land on our heads."

Later I told Wendy and Nick my fears. They both thought I was being paranoid as usual. That I should increase my Prozac.

I did.

But the dreams continued. Dreams of mass destruction. Of trying to find my way out of my father's house, to my building. Which was near these two giants that could one day crush me.

Then, that morning, they almost did.

"Geeee-Hod!"

Again, Nick tells me that we've just witnessed a major event in history right as we arrive at his home in the West Village covered in white dust and who-knows-what.

Hours later I cry.

Uncontrollably.

*

"Geeee-Hod!" yells the voice again at Mars Bar as I keep my head plastered to the comforting wood.

"George," says a far away voice, "Chet's on top of the bar yelling. He's just whipped out his dick."

I nod my head ever so slightly.

"Geeee-Hod!" yells Chet, as I begin to think how it all started with a blow-job, and came down to this. How it had now been almost four months since I started drinking daily, and taking what ever drugs I could get my hands on.

I wanted to forget. About the blow job. About Florida. But mostly, about the dead people I breathe in daily. The dead people who I can still hear crying every night. In the silence of the wind, and the halls of my mind. The dead people I see covering the cars, the sidewalks and windows of New York City. The dead people I see covering the faces of those I love.

"Geeee-Hod!" Chet yells again, as I peer through my half-opened eyes, and see the guy standing on the bar amongst spilled drinks, with what looks like his penis in his hand.

"Geeee-Hod!" he yells once more before my stomach finally gives way and I run into the blood-red colored bathroom and puke my guts out.

I then return to the bar and start drinking again.

And in my head, I hear Nick's voice telling me about

how I'm lucky to be living through this important time in history.

And then tears begin to well up.

History my ass.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. sexanddrugsandrocknroll@georgetabb.com
2. Stardumb Records rule, they sent me a bunch of releases, all of which rock. Including discs by: The Manges, Groovie Ghoulies, Darlington, Peawees, and my faves, The Apers. Oh, not to mention a Toys That Kill and The Ragin Hormones split single! Yay!
3. My pal Gamp has a band called Gimantis, and they fucking rule. Gamp is the guitar god of 2002!
4. Punk Rock!

People sometimes ask me what I think the next trend in hardcore will be. I have done extensive research into this subject and I have a prediction. The next big wave of hardcore will be the crossing of crusty D-Beat hardcore with straight edge youth crew. What the fuck is Felix talking about? Check out the prototype for this new style, Bonds of Trust from Sweden. OK, Bonds of Trust was a side project and only did one side of one split 7" and one comp track but they are like the Rosetta Stone of SE Crustcore. The totally hammering hardcore power of this band is rarely equaled. The sound can only be described as a perfect 50/50 mix of Chain of Strength and Totalitär. Tuned down and heavy, with brutal mosh parts, savage breakdowns, and pure HC power riffs. How can you lose? Unfortunately, this was a short-lived project and my plans for an LP and US tour were soon dashed. Right now the two kinds of DIY hardcore that are really cranked are D-Beat crust and fast hardcore. So suppose members of say Tear It Up and Severed Head of State started jamming? Or a Lifes Halt/Skistsystem side project? I heard Carry On broke up, so now they just need to team up with ex members of Acursed and off we go. The crust scene could benefit greatly from influence of SE living, emphasizing the poison-free anti-corporate lifestyle and physical fitness and hygiene. Likewise the SE scene could use some help with getting rid of things like khaki pants, tennis shoes, and designer sportswear, not to mention backpacks in the pit. A few SE bands that come close to this ideal musical style are Sairaat Mielaat, RAMBO, and Think I Care.

OK one of my favorite bands right now is Think I Care from Boston. Their second 7" is just about the perfect cross between Infest/Crossed Out style violent brutality and early 80s Boston HC bands like DYS and Last Rights. They had an earlier 7" that was crucial but not quite as brutal, but I wrote about that one before. Anyway, both 7"s reviewed in this magazine took a shot at the band's lyrics. So Think I Care chooses to sing about people who stabbed the scene in back instead of deep and meaningful political treatises. So fucking what! People losing the edge and stabbing the scene in the back, or stabbing their crew in the back are very real topics to real people. One of the things I like about crucial hardcore bands like RAMBO, Think I Care, DS 13, or Spitting Teeth is they are willing to address scene politics in an up front, sincere, and personal fashion without using veiled references or abstractions. In fact I'd rather hear a band sing about something that they feel strongly about and have some passion for than shallow bumper sticker politics that are poorly thought out. Sure I'd like to see more bands with informed political lyrics but to me what comes through in the best bands is their conviction for what they are singing about. Whether it's changing the world or saving the whales or putting the backstabbers in their place it's better to sing about what comes from the heart than what's likely to sell more records.

2001 in review. This year will long be remembered as one of the greatest years for DIY hardcore. Different genres of punk have come and gone over the years. Each has a glorious period, falls into obscurity and is perhaps later revived. I guess you could say that about most forms of popular culture. Regardless, 2000 and 2001 have been the years of manic raw fast thrash. I guess I was waiting for a revival of this sort of music for the last 15 years so I have been really in my element lately. I've invested a small fortune and thousands of hours into putting out records, booking shows, being a radio DJ, booking tours, and working the counter at the record store, because in 2001 I wanted to be as close to the music as possible. I got to go on two tours this year, one with Vitamin X and another with DS 13. I also got to attend some cool festivals such as Chicago Fest and Posi Fest and set up a fest of my own Thrash Fest 2. I was arrested and jailed at Chicago Fest for trying to incite a riot, which turned to be Felix the one-man riot. The only real down side to this year was the tragic and unforeseen event in New York City. I'm talking of course about the death of Joey Ramone.

***

For what it's worth, here are my top ten 7"s of 2001:

1. Gatecrashers—*Loud At Any Volume*
2. Think I Care—2d 7"
3. Vitamin X—*People Who Bleed*
4. Down in Flames—*Start the Fucking Fire*
5. Cops and Robbers—*Execution Style*
6. Tear It Up—One Sided 7"
7. Shark Attack—*Blood in the Water*
8. No Parade—s/t
9. No Time Left—*Zero Effort Solution*
10. Amdi Pedersen's Armée—s/t

***

For what it's worth, here are my top ten LPs of 2001

1. DS 13—*Killed By the Kids*
2. From Ashes Rise—*Silence*
3. Tragedy—s/t
4. Holding On—*Just Another Day*
5. Limp Wrist—s/t
6. RAMBO—*Wall of Death the System*
7. Victims—*Never Ending Lasting*
8. Spazm 151—s/t
9. Gordon Solie Motherfuckers—*Power Bomb Anthems*
10. V/A—*Tomorrow Will Be Worse Vol 2*

***

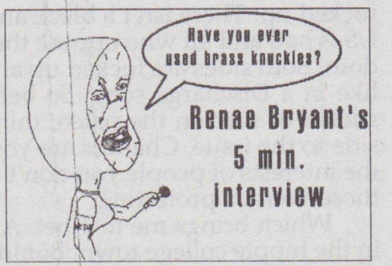
OK, Now I'm going to go out on a limb and depart from the party line in the punk scene on a popular issue. Axiom has a t shirt that reads "stop US sanctions on Iraq" and similar stickers, posters, and lyrics are quite common throughout the punk scene. I think a lot of people forget is that sanctions are the primary means of political pressure outside of armed conflict. The people who argued against military intervention in '91 argued in favor of sanctions instead of war. Now the same people condemn the sanctions they once advocated. Iraq has the resources and educated population to provide a reasonable standard of living for its people. Instead, those resources are devoted entirely toward keeping a dictatorship in power and preserving the privilege of an elite through a brutal police state. Sound familiar? The same leftists who protest

against US support for CIA corporate-backed dictatorships like those of Marcos and Pinochet are strangely silent when it comes to the brutal regime of Saddam Hussein. In the 60s a lot of people criticized student protesters as "dupes of the Russians." In this case I think they are dupes of the Iraqi elite. The people of Iraq are being starved and denied medicines not by the UN, but by the elite of Iraq. This cynical destruction of a nation's own population serves Hussein's propaganda ends. And, I must note, with some effect on college campuses and in the punk scene. Iraq continues to use resources that could be used to feed, house and care for its people to develop weapons of mass destruction, arm a massive police state, oppress the Kurds and other dissident minorities and otherwise behave in the fashion of military dictatorships from Stalin to Bokassa. Iraq is one of the only nations to use chemical weapons on its own people, oppresses the Kurds, waged costly and futile wars against Iran, Israel, and Kuwait/the US led coalition. Why would punk kids want to support such a brutal and bloody regime? I refuse to believe that just because Hussein poses himself as an opponent of US imperialism that his regime should somehow be let off the hook. Short of armed force, sanctions are the best tool of diplomacy to coerce oppressive regimes into granting basic human rights. Sanctions did a lot to help weaken the Apartheid regime in South Africa that we all protested against in the 80s.

Which brings me to this, in the Cold War people used to talk about the "captive nations," These were the countries absorbed into the Soviet Empire such as Armenia, Poland, Latvia, etc. Now that the Soviet Empire has collapsed, East Timor has gained autonomy and Eritrea has broken from Ethiopia. The two great captive nations I can think of are Kurdistan and Tibet (unless you count Palestine, which many would argue isn't a nation or ethnic group but a political construct). Now I'm very dubious of nationalism. In fact I think that nationalism is responsible for the majority of the problems in the world today: racism, oppression, war, hatred, and discrimination. If you look at the violence unleashed on the world by its close rival religion in the previous two thousand years, and compare it with the destruction of nationalism in the last two hundred, I think nationalism still comes out as more lethal. That said, many feel that oppressed ethnic groups have a basic right to self-determination. Most such groups have won their independence in the last century. Two that haven't are the Kurds and the Tibetans. It was the Kurds' aspiration for an independent state that kept the US-led forces from overthrowing Saddam Hussein in '91. Turkey, a powerful US ally and member of NATO, has a large Kurdish minority which has taken up arms against it. The Kurdish lands also extend across Iraq and part of Iran. Had Hussein been overthrown and a more moderate regime come to power under UN occupation, the UN would have had no choice but to recognize a Kurdish bid for independence. To oppose this would violate the basic tenets of the UN charter. However, Turkey feared a Kurdish independence movement that would destabilize its eastern border areas and embolden its own Kurdish minority, and in exchange for rallying "moderate" Muslim support and providing air bases, the US-led forces stopped short of destroying the Iraqi republican guard and overthrowing Saddam Hussein. This is like invading Nazi Germany but leaving Hitler in power and not disbanding the SS and expecting fascism to go away. If I had been in charge, I would have stormed with Norman right into Baghdad, set up a UN peacekeeping force, destroyed the republican guards, held a plebiscite to determine Kurdish independence, and held elections, etc. But since I'm in charge of selling 7"s and not international affairs, the interests of realpoltik won out over those of the Iraqi people. It was considered better to leave a tyrant like Hussein in power than overthrow him, in the interest of stability. So, if sanctions were to be lifted would the lot of life of the average Iraqi be better? I doubt it. They would still be oppressed and see their nation's resources squandered on weapons and repression. The way things are, the sanctions give Hussein somewhere to direct the anger of his people and the international left, instead of his own brutality, give the Turks a stable, if oppressive, neighbor, and the US someone to bomb when the president's ratings go down. I find it ironic that Hussein poses as a leader of the Muslim world against the West, when he is responsible for the death of more Muslims than anyone in the last two centuries. (remember the Armenian victims of genocide weren't Muslims.) The point I'm trying to make here is that if you look beyond the slogans and leftist propaganda handed out on campuses, you might see that it's all fucked up. There isn't a black and white reality where the US is bad and all who oppose them are champions of freedom. Both sides are fucked up and compete for power just like in a Discharge song. So before you buy the bumper sticker or sew on the patch, think a little bit about every side to the issue. Chances are you are unwittingly serving the interests of people you don't agree with any more than those you are protesting.

Which brings me to Tibet. A friend of mine who lives in the hippie college town, Boulder, Colorado, did a scientific survey of the most popular bumper sticker in town. The winner: "Free Tibet." Now I talked a little bit about this in a column with a very similar point a few months ago. Well here it is again. Tibet is an isolated nation in the Himalayas that shunned contact with the outside world well into the 20th century. China and England competed for rights to exploit it commercially in the early 20th century. But it was not until the Chinese Communists defeated their rivals in the Chinese Civil war that Tibet was invaded by China and incorporated in the People's Republic of China. Tibet, essentially still a medieval kingdom, was brought into the 20th century at gunpoint like many weak nations before it. The Chinese followed the classic imperialist techniques perfected by Europeans earlier on. They systematically destroyed Tibetan culture, killed or jailed those who resisted, and have spent decades trying to assimilate Tibet while exploiting its resources. The Tibetans, with their reclusive medieval society and mystical Buddhism, have become the darlings of the new age liberal elite. The people who protested in the 60s now have a pet cause they can support, rock bands play Free Tibet concerts and release "Free Tibet" CDs. The Dalai Lama is an international celebrity and those damn bumper stickers are everywhere. How, then, do these high-minded liberals plan to liberate Tibet? Through meditation and good deeds? I think not. One way to expel a colonial power is armed force. Remember that US-led UN forces fought the Communist Chinese in Korea for three years and achieved only a standstill. A full-scale war with China is probably in the future, but it won't be over Tibet, although that might be a powerful propaganda tool in such a conflict. Either way, I doubt this is what the new age types have in mind. A war between the US and China would pretty much be World War III and a total bloodbath that will provide fuel for generations of Dis bands. This leaves economic sanctions as the most powerful tool to pressure the Chinese to at least respect human rights in Tibet, if not abandon it. Fat chance of this you might say, but remember, South Africa voluntarily withdrew from Namibia/Southwest Africa under international pressure. I'm sure, though, that the same liberals driving their cars with the Free Tibet stickers on them snatch up bargain

goods at discount stores that are made in China possibly by child laborers and political prisoners. Meanwhile, the global elite has granted China entrance into the World Trade Organization, which continues to prove that this organization exists only to further the interests of a narrow elite with no concern for the rights of ordinary working people. The WTO is so fucked up, ordinary national governments are starting to look good. The global economy is so dependent on cheap Chinese-made goods and corporations are so hot to exploit the Chinese market that all concerns for human rights are forgotten. OK, I don't want anyone to think I've gone off the deep end and turned into some right winger here, I just despise the hypocrisy of the liberal left and I hate the way it infects the punk scene, where people should have more critical thinking skills.



As I hope most of you must have realized, these columns are written about two months before they appear in the actual issue. This column that I am writing right now in January will appear in the March issue. This is no fault of MRR, it's just the hectic pace of the publishing world, I'm sure. So by the time this column appears I will have missed five issues/columns. This is the most I have ever missed since I started writing in 1996. This means that either I fucking suck tremendously and don't take my columnist responsibilities seriously or I am spread too thin and unable to keep up with all of my responsibilities. I like to think that the latter is the valid assertion. So here I am five months later.

The last column I wrote was near September 1, 2001. All Or Nothing HC went on a short tour up the central valley up to Portland, OR and down the coast on the way back, shortly after. We returned from tour September 11, 2001 at 3:00 am. Too exhausted to do anything other than sleep, and sleep is what I did until 9:00 am when I received the call, like so many others did, to turn on the television. I literally became a couch potato (being that I was still "off-track," having one of my three months off from year-round teaching). Probably, like many others, I also became slightly depressed. I had a hard time focusing on what now seemed to be trivial concerns: a band, a zine, MRR, etc. The only thing that made me feel better was substitute teaching while off-track. Children have an awesome power to ground you when you're feeling fucked in the head. I highly recommend spending time with them whenever your priorities are out of whack, because they force you to focus on them and not yourself. They rule. Anyway.

So, I stopped writing. I had to force two papers for UCR out of my skull. They were the most grueling papers of my entire academic career, though not necessarily the toughest. I stopped journaling and writing lyrics/poetry. I got my health in check and I finally have that athletic body I had when I was 21 (but that's another story for a different column). Now here I am ready to be responsible again, ready to write again. It was weird. I felt as though I had nothing to say. As Abe Lincoln said, "It is better to remain silent and be thought a fool, than to open your mouth and remove any doubt." So, anyone who actually cares, please consider my hiatus a time of much needed selfish silence.

There's a joke that goes like this: "In lesbian relationships, the first date the woman pulls up in a Honda, the second date she pulls up in a moving van." Don't be offended, a lesbian told me the joke about seven years ago to illustrate to me the rapid moving nature of "most" lesbian relationships. So far, in my experience, in my circle of lesbian friends (which I promise is a wide circle and ever changing) this joke has held a frightening amount of validity. As a result of this, I am currently being affected by such irrational behavior. My roommate (lesbian for about two and half years) met a girl on-line (what a novel concept). She of course told me she was going to "take it slow" and she "just got out of an unhealthy relationship and didn't want to rush into another"...blagh, blagh, fucking blagh. So, the roommate BS starts immediately. We have been friends since junior high, went to cosmetology school together, she was my hairdresser for fourteen years, and we had what I thought was a strong and true friendship. Then it's like a cheesy roommate movie. She blows off our friendship for pussy. Then the ultimate betrayal comes...the moving van. Sure enough, she and I spat. I say, maybe I should move out. She couldn't agree more (the unexpected response...proving you should only say those things that you truly mean). I have until Jan.2, 2002. Great! So tomorrow I am moving into an overpriced apartment. I have spent the last week of my life packing the endless shit that I have amassed over ten years into countless boxes. I dumpster dive for boxes, boxes, and still more boxes. My van reeks like Rite Aide trash. The girlfriend has moved in already and I've had to deal with their silly, slap-happy, in love bullshit for almost a week and it sucks. Usually, I'm happy for people when they fall in love, this time I'm bitter. I feel like a guy. I've lost a roommate (who kept my bills down) and a best friend, all over temporary pussy. So as the world turns.....

Next. I thought I had made a firm decision to enter the PhD program at UCR. This last quarter has convinced me otherwise. This quarter I had Dr. Ortiz (my faculty supervisor, who just happens to be a spitfire Latina academic) and Dr. Timar (the commuting-weekly-from-Berkeley professor who spends his off time restructuring the educational systems of Eastern European countries, and has taught at Berkeley, Stanford, and Yale). Can you tell which one I prefer? The last time I had Timar I successfully kept my mouth shut because all the doctoral candidates couldn't hear themselves talk enough. This time I spoke. I should have kept my mouth shut.

The class Timar taught was on "Policy Analysis." Basically, we learned how to decipher viable policy options from those that for different reasons were dead in the water. The final project of the class was to choose an "educational problem," conduct a literature review (research), present the policy alternatives and choose a policy that according to the research could work as a course of action to address the "educational problem." I decided that I would state the educational problem as "White students outperforming minority and economically disadvantaged students by 12 to 34 points in all areas of the California SAT 9 and the Texas TAAS." One test is norm referenced (compared to the national norm) and one is criterion referenced (based on state standards, which could be lower than the national norm). California's SAT 9 is norm referenced and the Texas test is criterion referenced. Anyway. I present my paper in usual Renae Bryant animated fashion (rather than stuffy academic fashion). During my paper debates arise. Timar makes an assertion that GATE (Gifted And Talented Education) students should be grouped together for their academic benefit...blagh, blagh, blagh. This pisses me off because this is called tracking. When you track the high performing students together, you also track the underperforming students together, which is inherently racist and dominant

class-perpetuating. Timar had previously stated that special education students should be mainstreamed into regular education classes. So, I pointed out the inherent contradiction in those two statements. Timar was not pleased. I speak again and then finally conclude my paper with my chosen policy alternative. At which point Timar replies, "Well..." Some smart ass in the class pipes up, "What kind of grade is "Well?" Fuck me.

Graduate school is a bane and a blessing. It's awesome because you learn so much and are more empowered. It's a bane because if you are working full-time, trying to do a band, etc., you have no life. I am tired of not enjoying my life to the fullest. I cannot imagine three more years of this. So I must postpone and hope I can do well for these last two quarters because I am seriously burnt out on school. I want to be an existentialist punk rock teacher.

I did not think that I had anything to say for this column. I guess I was wrong. My band, All Or Nothing HC, is playing around. We are rerecording our full length and adding five songs to it in late February. We are only doing weekend tours until graduate school and my comprehensive exams are finished in May. We plan a short tour in June and a long tour in September, so visit the ontherag website for updates. Once I'm settled in my new place, I will put some energy into finally doing another issue of *ontherag* zine. The compilations are still in the works but I still need tracks from more female fronted bands. Anyone interested can send a demo to the address mentioned below. I still consider my house to be a crash pad for touring bands in the SoCal area so contact me if you need a place to stay. I am limited in booking right now because of time, but it never hurts to try. As always you can contact me at webmistress@ontherag.net and PO Box 251 Norco, CA 92860-0251 and www.ontherag.net.

PS. By the time this column is printed we will have already played the benefit for the future Anarchist Center of Los Angeles. Anyone wanting info on this group or how to get involved can contact Erica at (213) 252-1967. Consider Erica the featured activist of my column for this month.

If you thought that a strike of the magnitude that hit 9-11 might shake things up a bit, like I did, you were as wrong as I was. Less than two months after the attack, I was watching a CNN report on an Israeli attack against the Palestinians. Just as the camera was moving past a man laying motionless on the street, Wolf Blitzer cut in to let us know of breaking news. Cut to Florida, and OJ's lawyer. The important news was this; OJ's home had been raided in part of an investigation into an Ecstasy ring. For about ten minutes, OJ's lawyer professed Juice's innocence. That was it. I've done a fair amount of work on the state of the US media, its corruption, lack of substance, and so forth, but I was in awe nonetheless. What a transition. Israel attacks... but hold on, OJ's house was searched.

There's a show on CNN called *Talk Back*, where they bring in professional commentators to discuss issues with an audience. Immediately after 9-11, they were bringing in pretty good people. For example, they might bring in columnists from Arab and Israeli newspapers to discuss the latest round of violence between those groups. Last time I watched the show, or part of it, anyway, they were back to normal: bringing in talk radio yahoos who probably didn't graduate from high school. The topic was John Walker. One commentator made the assertion that Walker was the product of liberal upbringing, because the foundation of liberalism is moral relativism. Now there are quite a few things wrong with that assertion, but the most important is that nobody who is familiar with the meanings of the terms "liberalism" and "moral relativism" would make it. It's like saying Communism is the foundation of Confucianism, or that punk rock grew directly out of bluegrass. I don't want to spend much time arguing the point, because it doesn't warrant argument. My point is, CNN, "the news leader," brings complete idiots—not just lapdogs like Jeff Greenfield and company, but complete idiots, who literally do not know what they are talking about, onto its airwaves to comment on the issues of the day. It's the sort of thing we take for granted, but when you actually think about it, it's pretty troubling.

And just yesterday I saw a new low on the local news here in LA. Here is the extent of the story, though it's a bit hard to believe: McDonald's has twenty new items. Customer's are excited because all of those items are 99 cents or less. Here is some footage of people at McDonald's. Again, even after years of reading and writing about media corruption and some time working for a media watchdog organization, I was surprised. I had never seen such brazen corporate cocksucking in the "news." All of this between two and three months after 9-11, not to mention another suspicious plane crash, Richard Reid's attempted attack, the US being in the midst of a military campaign, the violence between Israelis and Palestinians, and two nuclear (or as our president would say, nuke-yoo-lar) powers on the brink of war. But fuck all that, another fast food restaurant has a 99-cent menu. Could the media possibly be getting worse? skipyskip@aol.com

Chart Toppers

After a very bizarre holiday season and numerous other factors (including, but by no means limited to, my own personal procrastination), I'm taking the "cop-out" route for my column this month. Strangely enough, I've come up with a bunch of great topics to write about for upcoming months (which is often the hardest part of the creative process for me), but I had virtually no time to spend doing the research. So, those ones will have to start next month.

In the meantime, *Multinational Monitor* has just published its annual "Top Ten Worst Corporations of the Year" list, and I thought a nice compromise between your wanting to learn more about the ugly nature of global capitalism and my inability to do my homework for the month would be to review their list and add a few comments here and there.

Now, I've written extensively about most of these "wonderful" companies in past columns, but there are a few surprises. Truthfully, I hadn't even heard of two them. Regardless, the reason that they made the *MM's* list is for the activities they engaged in over the course of 2001 (with only vague exceptions). I'll also try to provide a small bit of background info on them where necessary. So, with no further ado (except to note that these are in no particular order, and that you should probably try to find the Dec. 01 issue of *MM* to find the full stories, since I've had to short-

en them quite a bit), here's the worst of 2001:

Bayer Co.

Bayer, the company that gained notoriety for its s/t aspirin (which originally contained heroin, believe it or not), is causing a lot more headaches than it's solving these days. Once a leader in the pharmaceutical field, Bayer has grown to encompass much more, including being a large player in the agrichemical field (no pun intended). They currently have plans to purchase Aventis Cropscience, which, if you've ever been anywhere near farmland in the past ten years, you'll probably recognize.

However, most of Bayer's problems in 2001 were still related to the medical industry. First off, PAL (Prescription Access Litigation) project, has brought a suit forth against Bayer, claiming that it "unlawfully paid three of its competitors—Barr Laboratories, Rugby, and Hoechst-Marion Roussel—$200 million…to abandon efforts to bring cheaper generic versions of [the drug] Cipro to the market." So, they obtained the exclusive rights to the drug Cipro (meaning they could keep it lucratively expensive). What significance does that have? Well, Cipro is the leading antibiotic used to treat the effects of anthrax. After watching the prescription rate of Cipro skyrocket (especially when paranoid people demanded prescriptions for no reason whatsoever and their money-grubbing doctors were more than happy to comply), Tommy Thompson decided that the US government should keep a stockpile of 10 million Cipro pills on hand…just in case. When it was learned that an Indian company produces a generic version of Cipro for one twentieth the consumer cost of Bayer, Thompson demanded that Bayer enter into negotiations to sell Cipro to the government at a reduced price. Negotiations ended with Bayer getting $.95/pill, or four times the cost of a generic version.

Despite all of that, Bayer got what seemed to be the best possible PR campaign seen in years. After ripping off taxpayers for hundreds of millions of dollars, they had this to say: "We are grateful that our researchers developed a product that is crucial in the hour of need. The people of Bayer are very motivated and dedicated to playing an important role in assuring that the American people have adequate quantities of Cipro, which we pray are never needed." Bless their hearts.

ExxonMobil

The biggest oil company in "Big Oil" is big indeed. In terms of revenue, ExxonMobil is the largest corporation in the world. And it's because of this massive size that they're able to cause problems in virtually every corner of the globe.

In Alaska, they're fighting tooth and nail to open up the Arctic Wildlife Refuge, which happens to be the largest natural wilderness left in the US, for oil drilling. And to this day, ExxonMobil has yet to cough up a single penny of the $5 billion penalty it received for the crash of the Exxon Valdez, the largest oil spill in history, which destroyed a massive amount of marine life off the coast of Alaska's Prince William Sound.

In Africa, ExxonMobil is the biggest player involved in the production of the Chad-Cameroon pipeline. This World Bank-supported project will finally bring the overt corruption and pollution of an under-regulated petroleum industry once enjoyed solely by Nigeria to a larger part of Africa.

In Louisiana, ExxonMobil was ordered to pay a judge and his family $1 billion. It turns out that you'll actually get in trouble if you try to clean radioactive pipes on your land and it makes your neighbors (and their land) a little bit sick. Who knew?

In Indonesia, ExxonMobil has been accused of being complicit in a massive violation of human rights committed by the Indonesian military in Aceh Province. They had apparently hired the military to provide security for a natural gas project and Indonesian military (as it's so capable of doing) went a tad overboard. Of course, when it got slapped with a lawsuit by the International Labor Rights Fund this past year, ExxonMobil "categorically denied" the allegations, claiming that they "condemn the violation of human rights in any form."

And finally, in case you feel left out from ExxonMobil's global atrocities, there's the issue of global warming. Despite a virtual consensus among modern scientists of the tangible (and terrible) effects of global warming (the exception, oddly enough, being scientists that were hired by big oil and/or energy companies to study the problem), ExxonMobil remains the most steadfastly ignorant not just about the problem, but about whether the problem even exists. While almost all major polluters have now conceded that global warming is both evident and serious and have even begun to make slight (I repeat, slight) changes to curb the problem, ExxonMobil is still fighting to deny its existence. (I hereby invite them to spend the remainder of this winter in Wisconsin, where I spent this past weekend, the first in January, walking around in no more than jeans and a sweatshirt. Had I tried that anytime between my birth and 1993, I'd have been dead in less than ten minutes.) To paraphrase their own CEO, global warming is merely a theory and nobody should be making drastic changes to their business practices because of a theory. Of course, global warming will have to wreak an enormous amount of environmental havoc before it moves beyond the "theory" stage, which I'm sure is completely unrelated to the amount of cash that ExxonMobil can rake in during that same time period.

Southern Co.

Speaking of pollution, Southern, the largest power/utilities company in the US, creates a lot of it; more than anyone else in fact. According to a study of 1999 emissions by US Public Interest Research Group, Southern led the list in sulfur dioxide, nitrous oxide, and carbon dioxide, three of the most prominent polluting agents in existence.

Most restrictive laws passed in the US will contain a grandfather clause that assists in transition and keeps them from being over-burdensome. The US Clean Air Act had a grandfather clause that exempted power plants built before 1970 from the new standards of the law. However, over thirty years later, some 40% of Southern's generating capacity is served by these same "grandfathered" plants.

And to keep the grandfather clause of the Clean Air Act intact and other "restrictive" pollution laws off the books, Southern dumps millions of dollars into the political arena. They're one of the largest donors to political parties, they help run political action committees to help fund key players in energy and environmental issues, and they spend millions on lobbyists. Of course, I might add that all of this money *could* be used to build new, lesser-polluting power plants. Someone send me an application…

Abbott Laboratories

Abbott Labs is a large company in the health care industry with a surprising knack for ripping off the government (which, considering the health care industry, is saying a lot!). Abbott and a similar Japanese firm, Takeda Pharmaceuticals, started a joint venture known as TAP Pharmaceutical Products Inc., with the sole purpose of marketing two different drugs. One of these drugs, Lupron, is used for the treatment of prostate cancer.

TAP apparently gave away a massive amount of free samples of Lupron and, when assured that a particular doctor or hospital would switch to their drug, provided

implicit instructions on how to bill Medicare for the free samples. While the suit was brought to court in 1996, they were convicted just last year. During the case, one doctor from Boston testified that he was offered a $25,000 educational "grant" if he would switch from some cheaper Lupron alternative back to Lupron itself. I can't begin to explain how bizarre I find it that there is so much corruption and deception involved with prostate cancer.

Abbott doesn't stop there though. They also apparently engaged in the same practice with medical supplies, beating out competitors by offering discounted prices and the means by which to bill both Medicare and Medicaid for a much higher price.

And to top it all off, Abbott was one of two companies sued by West Virginia's Attorney General for the deceptive and aggressive marketing of the drug OxyContin. OxyContin's main active ingredient, oxycodone, is a member of the same drug family as opium and heroin. OxyContin is consequently one of the most abused prescription medications on the market. WV's AG says in her suit that Abbott knew about OxyContin's propensity for patient abuse and addiction, yet marketed it in a coercive manner in an attempt to gain a monopoly on the narcotic pain medication market.

As if health care reformists needed more fuel for their fire, Abbott (arguably one of the smaller fish in the sea) provides a glaring example of the massive changes needed in this industry.

Philip Morris

Yes, I and everyone's grandmother have written about the horrible business practices of Philip Morris and their redheaded stepchildren, Kraft Foods and Miller Beer. *MM*'s reasons for listing them in the top ten were mostly the same for which I chose to write another column about them a few months ago: 1) their new attempt to showcase themselves as some kind of socially responsible company even while they sought to undermine the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and continue to advertise cigarettes in a terribly profound manner and 2) for releasing a study in the Czech Republic that purported to save the government hundreds of millions of dollars in health care costs through the premature deaths of smokers.

Yes, these are terrible practices, but I'd just be rehashing old material if I covered it again (kind of like a few months ago when a miscommunication between me and MRR HQ caused one of my columns to be printed a second time). Instead, I'd like to mention (for anyone that hasn't already heard), that Philip Morris is trying to change its name. Yes, come April (probably soon after you read this), PM's shareholders will be voting on, and most likely passing, a resolution to change the company's name to Altria. Now, some alarmists would have you believe that they're trying to pull some kind of semantics trick over on the American public, since Philip Morris has one or two negative connotations associated with it. However, I tend to believe Mr. Geoffrey Bible, PM's CEO, in his statement about the two primary reasons for the change. The first is the need for clarity. Apparently, it was way too difficult for people to refer to both the cigarette giant and the cigarette branch of the cigarette giant as Philip Morris. According to (the) Bible, the new name will make "it clear how to refer to our tobacco companies and how to refer to our parent company." Secondly, the change is needed to solidify Philip Morris' new image as the patron saint of corporate responsibility.

As for the reason for picking "Altria," Bible explains that it derives from the Latin word "altrus," referring to the company's desire to "reach higher" in all that it does. I'm sure that court clerks everywhere will be desiring to "reach lower" after retyping every single name change on their lawsuit papers.

Argenbright

Argenbright is one of those companies that I had never heard of before. Apparently, most people hadn't until September 11. Argenbright controls roughly 40% of the airport security market in the US. Yes, it seems easy to look at the aftermath of last September's terrorist attacks and put the blame on airport security (though I would point at US foreign policy first). However, one should keep in mind that these terrorists brought down two of the largest symbols of capitalism and put a mighty big gouge in one of the largest symbols of militarism with nothing more than strong will and some box cutters.

However, that doesn't change the fact that Argenbright already had a history of poor performance. In May of 2000, they pled guilty to two counts of lying to federal regulators and paid $1.55 million in fines for failing to do proper background checks on its security screeners. In lieu of charging Argenbright for numerous other contract infractions, the government gave them a compliance period in which they could rectify their mistakes and a three-year probationary period. This plea agreement had to be reworked in October of this year when a government report listed seven massive violations of the compliance agreement. Following October's report, Argenbright's probationary period has been extended 3-5 years and they will be forced into new background security measures.

It probably won't really matter in the long run, since the US government voted in November to make all airport screeners federal employees. This will require a higher standard of professional standards (read: lots of piss tests, background checks and other Orwellian requirements), but it will bring with it better benefits and higher wages. Argenbright was by no means the worst corporate criminal of the year, and it's kind of sad that they suffer the consequences much worse than the other nine listed here, but they are a good example of everything that's wrong with the privatizing of services that are best served by the government itself.

Wal-Mart

Unfortunately, Wal-mart's reasons for being on this list are pretty weak. This is not to say that they don't deserve to be on the list. They rightfully deserve to be on the list and could very well be placed right on the top…just not for the reasons that the *Multinational Monitor* gives.

Here's their story: The Domini 400 Social Index, put out by KLD Research & Analytics, lists the top 400 socially responsible companies. As one of the largest "moral" investing firms (hmmm…), KLD allows wealthy liberals to invest their money without worrying about losing their street creds in the "lefty" dept. (One would assume that to mean that KLD researches companies based on employee wages and benefits, environmental and political responsibility, and other "green" factors besides just money.) Somehow, they reviewed Wal-Mart's overseas sweatshop policies in comparison to major textile company's newly-revised overseas sweatshop policies and found that Wal-Mart's was the weakest. The fact that Wal-Mart wasn't doing enough to ensure living wages and reasonable working conditions for its overseas contractor-employees, while even the most heinous corporations in the land were making ample progress in this department, caused KLD to drop Wal-Mart from its list.

Thankfully, *MM* goes on to mention that KLD forgot about Wal-Mart's homogenizing of the American landscape, its crushing of worker organizations, its detrimental effects on mom-and-pop businesses everywhere and its large part in creating massive urban sprawl. I would also like to add Wal-Mart's uncompetitive business practices,

its role in the spread of censorship, and its deceptive advertising that suggests that its own sweatshop products are made in the heart of the USA, to the list.

Yes, as the world's largest retailer who showcases the worst that capitalism has to offer, Wal-Mart has rightfully earned its spot on the list and will surely be there for years to come. However, I would almost rather that *MM* would've skipped them for a year and put KLD on in their place. Any firm that would list Wal-Mart as a "socially responsible company" deserves a "swift kick in the ribs" from someone.

Sara Lee

In theory, Sara Lee doesn't seem like the kind of company that would be on such a list. Sure, it draws images of super-fattening, nasty, pre-packaged food, but hardly one of corporate misconduct. In reality, of course, Sara Lee is one of the largest food purveyors in the world and, in one of those cases where a company sells a disease and its cure (like Japan Tobacco's ownership of a lung cancer vaccine), a large line of female beauty and hygiene products (L'eggs, Playtex, Wonder Bra, and Hanes).

Sara Lee also owns Bil Mar Foods, maker of the yummy Ball Park Franks hot dogs. In 1998, the Center for Disease Control began to get calls from state health departments that had found traces of the dangerous bacteria, Listeria monocytogenes. After much research, the bacteria were linked to a Ball Park Franks facility in Michigan. According to Bil Mar paperwork, workers regularly tested for cold-loving bacteria on the plant's production line and had noticed a sharp rise in such bacteria after the replacement of a ceiling air-conditioning unit. In response, the company had its workers discontinue said testing and one month later, severe illnesses were being reported and Bil Mar was forced to recall millions of pounds of hot dogs and deli meats. They were a bit too late, however: 21 people died from the bacterial contamination and at least one hundred others had been seriously injured.

Last year, after an extended court trial, Sara Lee Foods pled guilty to two misdemeanor counts in connection with the incident. The penalty? $200,000.

Yep, plead guilty to ignoring safety measures that end up killing 21 people and you can walk away $200,000 poorer. This is an extremely sad example of the double standard in our criminal justice system. Corporations are considered the same as individuals in every instance where it's beneficial to them, but they are allowed to pay undoubtedly tiny fines (relatively speaking) for crimes that would land you or me in prison for years.

(Side note: I like being a vegetarian.)

Enron

I wrote about all of the problems at Enron last month, but the *MM* did teach me some horrifying information that most of the press (read: the mainstream) wasn't reporting.

Remember, Enron was listed as the 7th largest company in the US just one year ago. They admitted to fudging some of the numbers on their profit listings (and various other secret dealings) and, lo and behold, their stock was worth about $.42 ten months later and they have since filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

Apparently, because of their size and (supposed) worth as a company, Enron matched employees' 401k retirement plans with stock instead of cash. After the announcement of their misdeeds, the stock price began steadily dropping. In October, after announcing some grim news that foreshadowed the fall of the company, Enron "locked down" the pension plan, preventing employees from selling any of their accumulated stock while they switched pension plan administrators. The stock price was about $34 when the lockdown went into effect. When the "lockdown" was over a month later, it was worth less than ten dollars a share. In that short period, thousands upon thousands of Enron employees lost their life savings.

But in case you're worried about upper management…don't. Board Chairman Kenneth Lay cashed in before the stock price dropped and received over $200 million. The chairman of Enron Accelerator cashed in to the tune of $353 million. And, my personal favorite, Wendy Gramm (wife of former senator Phil Gramm) has been found to have cashed in for nearly a million dollars. She was a member of Enron's financial auditing committee, the group that is supposed to make sure that the ledgers are free of error.

Investigators are still trying to follow the money trail, as many upper executives transferred money to foreign accounts to keep it well hidden. Meanwhile, its former employees are trying to figure out how to put their lives back together. Perhaps it's a bit harsh, but I guess it shows what you get when you entrust your time and finances to a shitty multinational corporation.

Coca-Cola

Speaking of shitty multinational corporations… Coca-Cola had a good year. *MM* focuses on three particular happenings, ranked in increasing order of scariness.

First of all, Coca-Cola gained the exclusive global marketing rights to the *Harry Potter* flicks. While they've been marketing to children for years and might be the largest in-school advertiser, this might be the most blatant and most aggressive tactic yet. As put by SaveHarry.com founder Michael Jacobson, "an adored literary phenomenon is being put to work to sell more junk food."

Then there's the race discrimination suit. The company's African-American employees filed suit in 1999, claiming racism in pay raise and promotion decisions. After all the evidence was gathered, and Coke was sure to land a verdict of guilty, they settled. The settlement included $58.7 million in compensatory damages, $43.5 in pay equity adjustments, $36 million in program reforms, $24.1 million in back pay, and $10 million for promotional bonuses. This makes it one of largest discrimination trials ever. Thankfully, part of the settlement also included the establishment of an outside monitoring committee, to ensure that racism no longer rears its head within the Coke ranks.

Finally, the United Steel Workers Union and the International Labor Rights Fund filed a lawsuit against Coke and Panamerican Beverages (the primary Coke-bottling firm in South America) for complicity in the death of numerous union leaders in Columbia. Sinaltrainal, the union that represents workers in Columbia's Coke-bottling plants, has said for years that Coke maintains relationships with Columbian death squads as a fear tactic. Most of the plaintiffs in the lawsuit, which includes the estates of the former union leaders who were murdered and current union officials, have all been subjected to kidnapping, torture, and unlawful detention at the hands of said death squads. "The lawsuit alleges that Coke employees either ordered the violence directly, or delegated the job to paramilitary death squads that were acting as agents for Coke." Coca-Cola, of course, denies any wrong doing.

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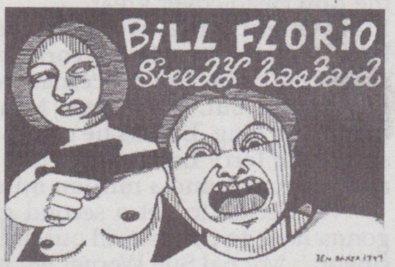
Well, there you have it. That was much more long-winded than I had expected, so I'll just mention that you should write (and/or send a sample of your zine) to Rainbow Bookstore Co-operative c/o Nathan Berg 426 W. Gilman St. Madison, WI 53703.

CrimethInc. Workers' Collective Bullet-in

CrimethInc. Guide to Getting It On.

1. Attitude. Correct approach is the foundation. Be smart. Have fun. Be natural. Enlightened hedonism. Engage in the present moment. Past and present do not exist. Only now. Discover your mission. Your destiny.
2. Self-development. Once one pays attention to the present a feed back loop of increasing sensitivity is begun. Meditation and behavioral cutups, the play of ritual, destroy cultural conditioning, exposing the true self. Meditation is the practice of stillness and focus of attention. Awareness is focused on different parts of anatomy starting with the physical body. Enough awareness brings transcendent experience, the sensation of connectivity.
3. The connections are more important than the parts. The concept of synergy; the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Increased sensitivity brings awareness on many levels of being. The more subtle levels are vast. The overlap between individual and universal becomes apparent.
4. Influence flows not only from us, but also into us. The ruling cabal understands that by hoarding knowledge of our true selves vast power may be wielded over individuals through the manipulation of symbols/subtle energies. Psychic defense becomes a priority. The greater the understanding of our true selves the more protection from malevolent influence we have.
5. We live in a magical world in which we are interconnected with and influence and are affected by all things. Change your mind, change reality.
6. Spell casting is logical once connectivity is realized. Responsibility becomes a major issue once we realize the profound and subtle effects we have on other people and everything else. A semi-developed person is a baby with a machine gun. Caution.

[Are third book, *In Search of the World, A Traveller's Almanac, Volume 1*, is now available. To inquire please write to CrimethInc. HQ, 2695 Rangewood Drive, Atlanta, Georgia, 30345, USA or visit www.crimethinc.com].



This is a true account. The names have only been changed when I forgot the names.

Coney Island, New York. August 10, 2001. The Shemps are informed that they no longer have a singer. It's the first time anyone quit a band I was in. Usually I'm the one replacing the quitter. (By the way, I was just recruited into the Sea Monkeys. Tom from Vital Music mail-order decided that being a New Yorker isn't fun anymore.) It's not a big deal, right? A singer is an easy spot to fill. You don't need to carry anything, and you get all of the attention. It would be nice to have a singer who doesn't already sing for another band anyhow.

I thought about it for awhile. Everyone we know who could sing is already in two or three bands. Hell, even Tony Arena has his own band now. We decided to put up flyers. Squeaky made a funny flyer that read "Garage Band Seek Singer!" with a mop-headed band from the 1960s with a question mark on one of the faces. A couple of weeks go by and no one calls.

September 1: **My name is Joe I'm really into garage punk. I saw your flyer at Trash N Vaudeville!**
ME: So what bands do you like?
Stone Temple Pilots! Soundgarden!
ME: And where do you live?
New Jersey!
ME: I thought so.

September 3: **I saw yer flyer at Bleecker Bobs. I'm really into garage and punk!**
Squeaky: So who do you sing like?
My friend told me I sound like the guy from BAD BRAINS.
Squeaky: Really? Like earlier or later BAD BRAINS?
Actually I've never heard BAD BRAINS. I was just compared to them.
Squeaky: So, what bands do you listen to?
NIRVANA!

At this point, Squeaky made a new flyer. This one had a whole bunch of record covers of bands we like, the idea being that if someone has no idea who these bands are, they won't call. Until…

September 5: **I saw your flyer at SEE HEAR.**
ME: That's promising. I was afraid you were gonna say Virgin Megastore. What are you into?
Joe: All kinds of punk and garage. I have all the *Back From The Grave* LPs. I was in a band before but I was the guitar player.
ME: Finally! I'll send ya a CD and you can show up next week to try out.

The day before the world blows up, Joe—who happens to be a really sweet guy—sings for a good hour or so. Not too terrible but he sorta looks a little lost without a guitar and sings a little more like Ted Franko than we're comfortable with.

September 15: **ME: I put an ad in the *Voice*.**
Squeaky: How much did that cost?
ME: Fifty bucks, but it worked for Sam and THE DIRT CHEAP (Sam's ACDC cover band). I know we're not trying to do ACDC but maybe we can find good people this way. (By the way the two people Sam recruited from the paper have since quit).
Squeaky: What does the ad say?
ME: Punk garage singer needed. Must have good presence, snotty from 70s Punk to Doo Wop.
Squeaky: That's funny.

September 20: **George: Hey what's up, my name is Georgy George.. I saw yer ad in the voice. I'm usually a drummer, I play a lot of ACDC. I can sing but I'm no Brian Johnson.**

September 21: John: Yo Brutha, my name is John Steel. I don't know much punk rock but I like lotsa 70s music!
ME: Cool, what's yer address?
John:187 West 128th St Apartment 6 3/4. You can count on me my brutha!

September 22: **Natia: Hey I've sung in a lot of funk bands in Florida.**
ME: Are you sure you're interested? I mean you really don't know anything about punk or garage… Why would you wanna sing for us?
Natia: I'm very open minded.
ME: OK, I'll send ya a CD.

September 22: **Charissa: Yeah I was in a noise jazz project… I go to FIT.**

September 22: Melanie: I sang for a couple of heavy metal bands in the late 80s.

September 22: **Cynthia: I really like Blondie a lot, I even try to look like Debbie Harry. I work for *BUST* magazine.**
ME: (to my girlfriend) Hey Margo? Isn't *BUST* a feminist zine?

Margo: Yeah, if wearing panties that say BITCH on them is considered being a feminist.

September 22 1 am: Rosemarie : Hey I just saw yer ad, and I wanna sing in a band.

ME: Have you ever sang before?

Rosemarie: In the shower…

ME: (Laughing). OK, what bands are you into?

Rosemarie: Are you making fun of me? I'm sorry for calling so late, I just got home and I'm a little drunk.

ME: Ok, yer hired…

September 23: (Caller ID: Carl Porcaro) As I pick up, I think… Oh shit, that's the guy from Killing Time! The guy that threatened my life on live radio ten years ago! Is he gonna try out for THE SHEMPS?! Damn, I thought he was a full time guido now…

Chloe: (in a British accent) Hi, I'm answering your ad for a singer.

ME: OK, have you sung in bands before?

Chloe: Yeah my last band just broke up… I like punk and garage and all that.

ME: Do you live with Carl Porcaro??

Chloe: Yeah, how did you know that!? He's my husband…

ME: I have caller ID, I recognized the name. Wasn't he in KILLING TIME?

Chloe: Yes, and ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN. (Phew It's the guitar player, not the singer. Carl Porcaro is actually a nice guy from Yonkers and I bought him a doughnut once.)

Tamar: Hi, I'm calling about your band, I'm a singer. I don't work a job or anything, I just sing in bands.

ME: Um, OK. Have you ever worked a job?

Tamar: I was a stripper once, what do you think about that?

ME: Dave, for some reason 14 girls have answered our ad in the last 24 hours.

Squeaky: What??? What's up with that?

ME: I have no idea, I think school just started and they're bored.

Squeaky: Well, I don't really want a girl singer, I sort of have an idea of what the singer of our band should be.

ME: Well what if they're good? Like, what if they can sing like Masayo from the PLUNGERS?

Squeaky: Well, then I'd reconsider, but I don't really know too many girls that can top Masayo. I already did the girl singer thing with the CHIMPANZEES. I don't wanna be another novelty to people…

ME: Well, we should still let them try out.

October 1: We're trying out Natia, who insisted that she liked our CD.

ME: That was OK, but we're really looking for someone who sings a little meaner. You know like a rock n roll sorta style, like Mick Jagger.

Natia: I'm not mean, I'm a girl. I'm not angry, you guys don't want a girl singer. Girls don't sing angry.

ME: Would you like me to make you angry?

Natia: No.

ME: OK, let's try it again:

Natia: Hey you guys should just let me be yer singer, I'm cute and lots of people will come see us play.

October 8: **Tamar: OK, I know all of your songs, I don't need the lyric sheet.**

ME: Hey that's pretty impressive.

30 Minutes Later: ME: Hey Dave that girl sang great! She's got moves and can holler and wail.

Mike: She was good, she knew all the songs too. Well prepared.

Squeaky: Yeah, I still don't want a girl singer.

ME: Yeah, she kinda scares me, I think I'd really be into seeing her sing for another band. I think she can beat us all up.

15 Minutes Later: Sleazy Practice Space Guy: Hey are you gonna have that girl sing for your band? She has a great ass! I was watching her on the monitor the whole time. I saw she had tattoos on her ass and shit… You should get her, I wanna watch her every week!

ME: Ok, Squeak, I see whatcha mean.

OK, many, many more weeks go by and it's a lot more of the same… A couple of people try out. I put an ad in the *NY Press*. We play a show with GUITAR WOLF and Dave Spazz comes back for the night. I get the following email.

"Bill, you need a singer??? I asked you last July if you wanna start a band with me when I move back to NY, why didn't you ask me before?" —Artie Phillie

So I call Artie up and tell him I didn't think of him because I've seen him sing before. Anyhow, Artie's into it and we schedule a rehearsal. This takes another few weeks because Artie lives in Baltimore and is going to school full time. We finally set up a day and Mike's grandma dies the night before.

ME: Hey Dave, let's do this anyhow, I'm sick of trying out all these people who have no clue.

Dave: Does Artie have a clue?

ME: Maybe not, but we can tell him what to do, I'll call Sam, Chris, Al and Andy and see if they can show up and play drums for us for an hour.

Of course all of them are out of town. The phone rings…

Will Tarrant: Hey Bill, I just got back in town after driving Voorhees on tour. Sorry, I missed yer show last week.

ME: Will! We need someone to fill in for us for an hour, Artie's gonna try out.

Will: (After about 60 seconds of laughing) Shit I wouldn't miss this for anything, I was only planning on getting loaded tomorrow night and since we got daylight savings time I'll make up that hour of drinking no problem.

So we meet up and Will does a great job at listening to my Walkman and playing the songs so Artie can sing em.

ME: Artie, that sucked, you sound like Tommy Rat.

Artie: Hey, gimmie a break… I haven't even sung in over a year.

ME: Did you learn the James Brown cover?

Artie: Sure…

Artie sings the James Brown cover great, then he does the Roy Head cover great.

ME: Alright Artie, we know you can sing… You just have to listen to a few records that actually have a real singer. As far as I'm concerned yer in. We have one more guy trying out. He's from Miami and claims to play piano and sing. Unless he comes in with a pimp suit and sings like Jerry Lee Lewis while holding a martini glass and playing piano a million miles an hour yer in.

We decide to get a second guitar player since we're gonna have to practice all our old songs again for the new singer… My pal Sue Werner steps in with no problem…

So we try out Roberto… He sings pretty good but I have problems with his story. He claims to be a hairdresser/actor. He also obviously didn't really listen to our CD, since he has no idea where to come in on any of the songs and thought I just put the cover songs for some extra music for him to listen to.

ME: This guy sings good, but I don't know…

SUE: That guy was a little herbish.

Squeaky: I think he sings great.

ME: Yeah, but he's had the CD for a month and he still doesn't know how the songs go.

Squeaky: Yeah, but I liked how he improvised…

ME: Ok, I'll edit a videotape of them and we'll get a second opinion.

Sam: They both we're good but I'd give it a 70–30 for

Artie. I'm sorta biased because you told me the guy claims to be actor.
Masayo: I like the skinny guy, that other guy is a good singer too? What do you think?
Andy: Even though I hate actors that Artie guy looks like William Shatner.

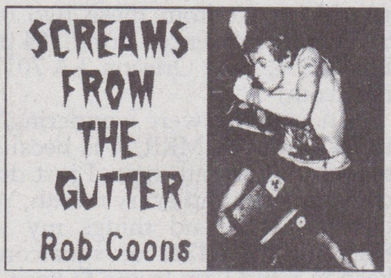
OK, so we figure since Artie isn't moving here for another month, we'll try out Roberto again. Squeaky tells me to learn a Jerry Butler song (which is pretty hard to sing) and we figure we'll try one of our new songs that we don't have words for and see what he can do. He sings great. He can go from Iggy Pop to Smokey Robinson without missing a beat. So I'm thinking, well maybe this can work.

In the car on the way home: **Roberto: So do you guys ever make any money?**
ME: No, sometimes we get like $50 bucks or something like that.
Roberto: Each!? (Now I could write a whole column about the "Each" comment. This is a common reaction normal everyday non-punk type people give. MC Charlie Boswell told me to just tell people you make about $5 a show. This way when they ask "Each!?" you can say yes. Either way, it's the wrong answer. Hell it's the wrong question!)
Roberto: Do you ever hook up with any girls that you meet at the shows?
(OK, now this is even an even worse question than how much do you get paid. I'm sorry but any girl that is gonna hook up with someone because they're in a band named after a pastitsprime stooge is not even worth the $5 you got from playing the show.)

One Week Later on My Answering Machine: **Roberto: Hey, I'm really sorry, but this isn't gonna work out for me, etc., etc., etc.**

Anyhow in conclusion... If you ever start a band, these are the rules.
1. You will spend countless hours and dollars practicing every week to play in empty dives for nothing.
2. You will do your best at making great records that will end up in a dollar bin, or the dumpster at Manhattan Mini Storage.
3. Your band will either get slightly famous for about four months and you'll break up, or you'll be in it for fifteen years and never get famous. Either way it's part of your life and you'll just start some other band.
4. You're either a band guy who talks about his band all the time and annoys people, or you're a zine guy, who is happy just annoying people without even mentioning it.
5 If you're reading *Maximum Rock N Roll* for more than a year you probably don't read want ads in the *Village Voice* other than the transsexual personals in the john.

Hey, if anyone wants to email me, I'm bill@candids.com. Feel free to offer the new improved SHEMPS a show in your basement or local dive of choice. I don't think I have an official mailing address anymore, but the truth is I don't like answering letters anyhow. Hugs! Bill



Damn, there is nothing quite like a good road trip to go see a show far from your hometown. Like many of you readers, I have driven thousands of miles over the years to go see bands that were not playing in my town. Hell, I have even flown across the United States to go see a show. And in all honesty I can't think of one time that I ever thought to myself, "Boy, that trip wasn't really worth it." You see there is something special about travelling to shows in faraway places. Usually it makes the bands seem better than you imagined, and you get to spend time in a foreign environment. I always like seeing new faces. And even if I am generally too shy to approach people, it sure beats seeing the same folks week after week. Plus it is always interesting to see how the crowds are different. Things like how people dance or how they interact with the band and each other seem to change from town to town. And how can you forget the excitement of strolling through a record or clothing store in a new town, hoping to score that long gone single or a t-shirt for only a buck or two. Let's hear it for the almighty road trip!

With that said, I want to mention a recent road trip that I took to see LIFES HALT's last show down in Los Angeles. Check out this line-up! LIFES HALT, TEAR IT UP, WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?, IN CONTROL, FUERZA X, YOUTH RIOT, and FIELDS OF FIRE. Can you believe that? Yeah, me neither. Obviously the show was awesome and it was at a cool club called The Smell, which is in the heart of skid row deep in downtown Los Angeles. Once I got inside the crowd was so overwhelming I did not even try to make it into the mid-sized room until the fourth band was about to start. (I watched the opening bands from afar) All the bands were on fire that night. People were dogpiling and stagediving like their lives depended on it. And it was so hot in there; the fucking walls were sweating. First off, lets give big hats off to TEAR IT UP who had flown all the way across the country to play three shows, including that one. Now *that* is fucking dedication! And speaking of TEAR IT UP, they did a crazed cover song combo during the show. Not only did they do an amazing version of AGNOSTIC FRONTS's "Friend Or Foe," but they busted everyone up with a not-so-smashing version of AC/DC's "Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap." After six bands everybody was more than pumped to see LIFES HALT. There were like 30-40 people on a stage that was designed to hold less than half of that. And like a couple hundred more squeezed into the main room. People were hanging off of ladders and the sides of walls just to catch a glimpse of the mayhem. I don't really know what else to say about LIFES HALT's mind-blowing set other than they went ballistic as always and I was glad nobody passed out from sleep depravation, heat stroke or dehydration. When it was all over those in the crowd shed tears, shared long hugs, and exchanged sincere smiles and we all knew we had witnessed something special.

A couple of weeks later we saw R.A.M.B.O. swing through town and they promptly blew everybody's ass out of the water. Ever since WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? got back from their US tour with LIFES HALT, I have been hearing the stories of the infamous R.A.M.B.O. show back in Philadelphia. Two words fit the stories I kept hearing....mayhem and destruction. (Now some footage of that show is on the recently released R.A.M.B.O. CD that is on 625 Productions, so check it out) Needless to say, I was highly anticipating their arrival so I could join in the shenanigans. The show at Gilman exceeded everyone's already high expectations. Without giving you a step by step story of the evening, let's just say it involved shaving cream, silly string, some cakes, a bunch of gladiators with swords, shields and helmets, a Baby Jesus piñata, The Virgin Mary, a cow, a sheep, Lucha Libre wrestlers, bad wigs, and three bewildered wise men. I am sure I am missing a few things, but you get the idea. It was total fucking mayhem that brought to mind the chaos of a DIESEL QUEENS or BLATZ show. R.A.M.B.O.'s show the next day

was on the verge of being a lot tamer until a seven-foot Christmas tree decided to join the pit. I would have to say I have never seen a Christmas tree hold its own like this one did amid the stage dives and body slams. Fuck, I had a lot of fun while they were here and they are super swell guys to boot! Needless to say the Gilman Street R.A.M.B.O. show and the last LIFES HALT show definitely top the list of two of my all time favorite shows.

So what is going on in the world of hardcore? Tons of shit as always. Due to space limitations, I just want to mention a few of them here. I cannot praise the upcoming powerhouse from Reno, NV called IRON LUNG enough. I have seen a handful of two-piece bands in my day, and I have not been impressed by many of them. (Except for the almighty GODHEADSILO) Well I have seen IRON LUNG twice now and I have been devastated both times. They are just so damn fast and heavy for a two-piece band. Look for their new EP that just came out on 625 Productions. And by the time this column hits the newsstands they will have finished a full US tour. I hope you all checked them out. On another positive note, yes it is true, COALESCE had reformed and they are going to do a tour this spring. I have seen them multiple times and I have never been let down. I can only hope that these shows will rock just as hard as in the past. And finally if you are like me you are always looking for new ways to get your CD and record fix. I recently stumbled across a killer mail order called Hardcore Holocaust, based out of Richmond, Virginia. They carry a variety of stuff that centers mostly on grind and crust. Their prices are totally reasonable and they seem pretty quick on their orders. Their website can be found at www.hardcoreholocaust.com or write to them at Hardcore Holocaust, PO Box 26742, Richmond, VA 23261-6742.

TRAPPED IN LIFE - *Blood and Gold* CD - Whoa, total hard/metalcore from Paris, France! Paris is not exactly know for their bands in this vein, but TRAPPED IN LIFE can definitely hold their own. They slam you over the head with some super aggressive choppy metal with big breakdowns and lots of double bass that is topped of with some vicious growling vocals. And the lyrics and artwork have that weird apocalyptic pseudo-religious feel to it that permeates hardcore these days. My only complaint is that I would like to see a little pace variation in their music, because it got to be a bit monotonous towards the end. By the way for those who are computer inclined there is a "Bonus Video Track" on the CD as well. Regardless, check it out for a kickboxing of a good time. (Good Life Recordings, PO Box 114, 8500 Kortrijk, BELGIUM; www.goodliferecordings.com)

4AM FATALITY - *I Defy* CDR - 4AM FATALITY from Las Vegas, NV sent me their seven-song demo and I found it to be pretty rocking. Think Boston hardcore and a slightly punker version of SLAPSHOT, and you will hit it right on the head. The singer on the first five tracks even has that snarling voice just like Choke. I am not sure if that is whom they are trying to emulate, but that is what it reminded me of. On the last two tracks they flip-flop the drummer to vocals and vise-versa and there is an obvious switch to a more upbeat pace. Not bad at all. (Omar, PO Box 82172, Las Vegas, NV 89180-2172)

FIRE DOWN BELOW - *All Goodness Is In Jeopardy* CD - Apparently when this was recorded this band was an eight-piece. Now they have been pared down to a six-piece. In all honesty, when I hear of a band having that many members, I generally have pretty high expectations. I want to hear a total cacophony of noise and chaos. Unfortunately, this just didn't cut it. While the tunes are fairly heavy, the music just sort of throbs and jumps along at a mid-tempo pace while the male and female vocalists trade creams back and forth. Maybe if there were a few time changes, or the recording was heavier, I might have enjoyed it more, but in the end it is fairly simplistic and didn't really do much for me. There was also a limited "live" CD of the band as well, which actually sounds a lot better and more energetic than the other CD. This makes me think that it was probably recorded after they turned into a six-piece and now there is actually some solid potential for a good grind band here. Go figure. (Gruntled Records, PO Box, Lansdowne, PA www.firedownbelow.net)

ANGEL CREW - *Another Day Living In Hatred* CD - Angel Crew? Sounds like the perfect name for a Christian hardcore band if you ask me. But from the looks of the lyrics I don't think these guys really fall under that description. According to what I have read, the ANGEL CREW contains members of LENGTH OF TIME, ARKANGEL, DEVIATE, and BACKFIRE. And the combination of these bands would be a good description of the ANGEL CREW. The music is mostly fast and ferocious well produced hardcore with that ever-present tinge of metal that keeps the fists swinging. I can't think of much else to say, but I feel their lyrics should speak volumes for the band. "How you figure you can fuck with me/I'll bring you down/Angel Crew/We'll turn your life upside down/You piece of shit we'll make you understand/Sucking mad dick getting down on your knees/Fake ass bitch we'll bruise your body till you bleed/Strength of one/ANGEL CREW." It sounds like they may have some sadomasochistic and homoerotic desires just dying to get out. (Good Life Recordings, PO Box 114, 8500 Kortrijk, BELGIUM; www.goodliferecordings.com)

HARKONEN - *Grizz* CD - It looks like this is a reissue of the somewhat recent vinyl EP that is under the same title. It also looks like they have added a few songs so you can spend even more money and buy the CD as well. But let's cut to the meat, shall we? HARKNONEN kick down some choppy hardcore that relies on a backbone crunch-filled repetitive riffs. A strong rhythmic bass line holds it all together while the singer screams his guts out over it all. The way the songs are structured reminds me of BOTCH, but HARKONEN isn't anywhere near as heavy. HARKONEN slow things down on the last one with a turbulent and mostly instrumental track with some cool bass effects. Overall, they have got themselves a quality release. (Hydra Head, PO Box 990248, Boston, MA 02199; hydrahead.com)

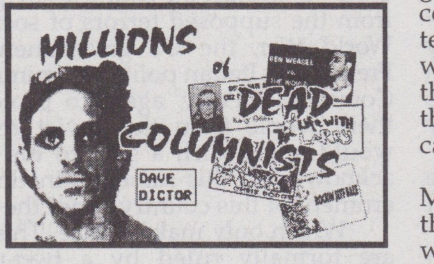
PARANOIZE - Zine - The covers says there are interviews with SOUR VEIN and HAWG JAW, plus a few more, so I was kind of excited. Unfortunately, the interviews were pretty brief and bland. There are a few music and show reviews as well, but I just wasn't that interested. This zine has a very heavy concentration on the New Orleans/Louisiana scene. So maybe if I lived in that area this may be a bit more interesting, but I just couldn't get into it. One thing to note though is that the zine comes with a CD-R of fairly well recorded live sets of ICEPICK REVIVAL and HAWG JAW. You'll get just what you would expect from these two bands, slow and sludgy SABBATH influenced grind. ($4 ppd: Bobby Bergeron, PO Box 15554, New Orleans, LA 70175-5554; paranoize@hotmail.com)

In case you were wondering why my column wasn't in last month's MRR, it is because I am only doing one every other month now. I just don't have the time these days for a column every month. Yet as always, please contact me and send things my way to PO Box 13085, Berkeley, CA 94712 or xgoatcorex@hotmail.com. Please keep in mind I am trying to keep the focus of this column

on all of the METAL and GRIND that does not make it into the regular review section. So if it is loud, hard and angry please send it my way.

"There's a feeling that comes from deep inside. A fire growing hotter as life goes by. I am swallowed. Consumed by my...Youth Enrage for all my life. Youth Enrage to strain and strive. Can't bail out. I never will. From the start never had that option. Youth Enrage... It will always be this hard to fight the hypocritical mind. It will always be this hard to fight the ignorant kind." —LIFE'S BLOOD - "Youth Enrage"

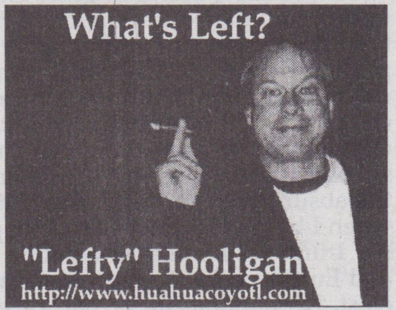
Anger and Love



Here I sit thinking and writing and trying to get back into a writing groove. After 9/11, I kinda let my writing/creativity groove stutter. I kinda got mad and have stayed mad four months and running. Mad that people got hurt and the eventual reactions to all that hurt. How eventually everyone's humbleness in the beginning of this tragedy has turned into slogans like "Wanted Dead or Alive" and "Smoke 'em Out of Their Caves." And with it the realization that 90 million percent of Americans agree with this glib rhetoric. So quickly the self examination period of wondering, Why Do They Hate Us So Much? Got dropped for knee-jerk, chest-thumping, flag-waving and those endless renditions of God Bess America. Hell even in St Patrick's Cathedral on Xmas Eve. Isn't it sacrilege to sing an Americanized secular song in church? Does God really have to be an American? I fucking hope not. So lately my writings have all turned into these political rants against Attorney General John Ashcroft and his war on the Constitution, the Bill Of Rights, and Due Process. At other times I would bleed on about the sweetheart deal Bayer has, reaping billions of dollars making antibiotics for anthrax. Watching Republicans like Tom Delay waiting to ascend to the leadership post for the Congressional House Republicans. Good ol' Tom Delay, who has evangelicized the belief that it is God's duty to keep minimum wage at $5.50 an hour. A man who would like to abolish Social Security, who wants to repeal the ban on assault weapons, and is cold hearted enough to refer to openly gay Congressman Barney Frank as "Barney Fag." Tom Delay is the pits, he is the shits, he is very ugly, and I guess this country truly gets what it deserves. And it will when he ascends to the top leadership post of the United States Congress.

But anyway, I'm trying to bust out of this angry ultra-political phase that I'm in. It's good for singing angry lyrics, for commenting on from the stage but its not healthy for me, day in day out. I'm living bitter and I need to get back to living and writing wistful and soulful, at least part of the time. When a young co-worker asked me if, "I still hated all cops." I replied that I didn't but that I still hated all Republicans. She walked away in disbelief and I realized then and there I'm tired of living on, "planet pissed off." So I'm working on it. I'm in my favorite writing workplace. I'm focusing on breaking out. I'm listening to Bjork's new album, *Vespertine*, which is so sweet and deep and cosmic. I'm way in love with this recording and with Bjork. Very in love! I'm floating along listening to her song "Cocoon" and then, "Aurora," then, "Sun In My Mouth." I know you're thinking, Dave's gone soft. It's OK, you gotta be soft if you want love in your life. Then I start thinking of one of my first conscious moments that I haven't thought about for a very long time. I am three years-old plus, living with my grandmother and grandfather. My mom worked all the time and my brother is not in my thoughts here. I am in my grandmother's dining room. I am sitting under the dining room table with my first and best friend at the time, Tutti Fruiti. There is a large table cloth on the table that hides us somewhat under the table. We can see my grandmother's and her friends' feet but nobody can really see us. We are holding hands and smiling, looking into each other's eyes and then giggling. We are alone together and we are so safe and very content. Sitting here remembering/channeling this, listening to Bjork, is the best place I've been to in a long while. So this is a Happy Valentine's Day wish for all those warm-hearted souls that might need to jump start themselves on a sweet moment. Hopefully you can relocate yourself into a warm and wonderful place.

That's all for now. mdcops@hotmail.com. Also, MDC is touring Europe this summer and we are playing the Holidays In The Sun Festival in England the third weekend in July. Afterwards we plan to go to Stonehenge and relax, if you got the time, the inclination, the energy, then come join us—bring a sleeping bag.



Gentlemen of the jury, we respect your patriotism. We would not, if we could, have you change its meaning for yourself. But may there not be different kinds of patriotism as there are different kinds of liberty? I for one cannot believe that love of one's country must needs consist in blindness to its social faults, to deafness to its social discords, of inarticulation to its social wrongs. Neither can I believe that the mere accident of birth in a certain country or the mere scrap of a citizen's paper constitutes the love of country.

I know many people—I am one of them—who were not born here, nor have they applied for citizenship, and who yet love America with deeper passion and greater intensity than many natives whose patriotism manifests itself by pulling, kicking, and insulting those who do not rise when the national anthem is played. Our patriotism is that of the man who loves a woman with open eyes. He is enchanted by her beauty, yet he sees her faults. So we, too, who know America, love her beauty, her richness, her great possibilities; we love her mountains, her canyons, her forests, her Niagara, and her deserts—above all do we love the people that have produced her wealth, her artists who have created beauty, her great apostles who dream and work for liberty—but with the same passionate emotion we hate her superficiality, her cant, her corruption, her mad, unscrupulous worship at the altar of the Golden Calf.

Emma Goldman, "Address to the Jury,"
Trial and Speeches of Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman in the United States District Court, in the City of New York, July, 1917

I love America more than any other country in the world and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her properly.

James Baldwin

I love my country, but fear my government.

popular bumpersticker
found for sale on left- *and* right-wing websites

American people ought to know that it is not them but their government's policies that are so hated.

Arundhati Roy

I've traveled extensively outside the United States only three or four times. Each time, I got homesick. Aside from family and friends, most of what I missed about this country was trivial, like the food. I love artery hardening American fare. You know, bacon and eggs, white bread sandwiches stacked with three kinds of coldcuts and cheese, steak and baked potato. I don't eat it any more because of my health, but when I did I was a sucker for punishment, enjoying my meals in greasy spoons and working class diners. Then, there's the sheer variety of American cuisine thanks to this country's diverse immigrant history. There's ethnic food so authentic I can enjoy the local dishes on those rare occasions I do travel, then enjoy them again when I get back home. Combine this with cross pollination, fusion and Americanization, my palate was pretty experienced before I traveled abroad.

Much further up the homesick list is language. I've never been good at learning languages, having a hard enough time with English. After months of barely communicating in a foreign land, me in my junior high Spanish and high school German plus whatever meager phrases I've managed to pick up of the local language, my hosts in their much better but still stilted English, and I'm desperate for a decent conversation with other Americans. It can't be the Queen's English. Got to be 'Murican. It's got to flow and dance and punch. Which leads into what tops the list. Humor. American humor is so broad and from so many different sources that it's impossible to characterize, except by its absence on long trips abroad. Then it's blank stares, folks not getting my jokes and me not getting theirs, inappropriate laughter and just as inappropriate silence. Humor is absolutely essential for me to cope with the absurdity of the world, and it's painfully unavailable when I travel, except as a strictly private matter.

I first got homesick traveling around the Middle East and Europe in 1974, when I was a dyed-in-the-wool anarchist. No nationalism or patriotism for me, so I was startled by my feelings of homesickness. My government was still fighting in Vietnam while brutally suppressing leftist movements at home. Yet there I was feeling intense longings for my country. For the first time, I realized I was an American. Since then, I've come to understand that you don't have to be nationalistic or patriotic to feel a sense of place and community, but even back then I understood there was a difference between a country and its government, and between a people and their state. It's truly possible to love this country and its people while fearing the government and opposing the state.

The standard political logic in this country denies this distinction and argues that the American land and its people, and the US government and its constitution are inseparable. This is on top of thinking, inherited from the Cold War, that conflated capitalism with democracy and socialism with totalitarianism. Needless to say, there are kinds of socialism like social democracy that are quite comfortable with western representative democracy, as Sweden illustrates, and there are forms of capitalism that easily coexist with dictatorship, as Singapore attests. As for the myth of American unity, the US government time and again makes this very distinction between the country and the people on the one hand and the form of government or kind of regime that runs them on the other hand. The US was never against the Russian or Iraqi or Cuban people. Our government just didn't like the Soviet government or Saddam Hussein's regime or Castro's one-party state. Junior Bush's administration said it again in America's most recent war when it was affirmed the US was not against the Afghani people, just the Taliban regime. The US didn't want to occupy the country of Afghanistan, just blow away its government.

The US only applies the distinction between people and government to unrepresentative dictatorships, or so the rationalization goes. In democratic societies like ours, there's a coherence between the people and their government, and hence there's no need to make the distinction between the two. This weak justification evaporates once we take into account the numerous democratically elected governments that the US government has overthrown—from Arbenz in Guatemala in 1954 to Allende in Chile in 1973—to protect the countries in question and their people from the supposed terrors of socialism. After the second World War, the US government interfered with both French and Italian politics to minimize the influence of the Communist Party, again to protect these countries and their people from the Soviet red menace. Those who would apply such a split to the rest of the world must acknowledge this same distinction for the US. The government of this country is not the same as the country.

Which only makes sense. This country and its people are formally ruled by a two-party electoral system through a federal government based on constitutional principles of republican democracy. We could boot the Democratic and Republican parties, elect a full-on Green or Communist or Fascist government and we'd still be America. A Green or Communist or Fascist regime could seize power through force of arms, and we'd still be America. It's even theoretically possible that we could have no government at all, and still be America. After all, it's been over a decade since the command economy and one-party Soviet state disintegrated, replaced by the mafia capitalism and tottering parliamentary democracy we're familiar with today, and the country of Russia, its people and its culture remain largely intact. During the existence of what Ronald Reagan called "the evil empire," the US aided and abetted Soviet dissidents who loved their country, but hated and opposed their government. Turnabout seems only fair play.

(This distinction, while simple to understand, shouldn't be understood simplistically. If a Fascist regime seized and held power in this country for over a century, America would be dramatically changed as a consequence, much as if this country disintegrated into civil war and racial separatism the US government would also be crucially changed. Country and state are related in a complex dialectic, autonomous yet co-evolving.)

This rather elementary difference I've drawn helps point out the obvious problems in the term "anti-American Left" being bandied about these days. Before going further, I need to acknowledge that there are elements on the Left in this country that do hate America and would be overjoyed at its destruction. Perhaps over represented among crusty punks and disaffected youth in general, I argue that this anti-American Left is just a fraction of the overall Left, which conservative forces in the US are using to tar the rest of the Left with an overbroad brush. Original New Leftist and ex-SDS honcho Todd Gitlin has been flying an American flag and talking up the need to counter Islamic fundamentalist terrorism ever since September 11. Yet even he has been castigated by the right as part of this anti-American Left for making cautious remarks questioning Junior Bush's handling of the war in Afghanistan and the elimination of civil liberties at home.

David Horowitz was also a red diaper baby New Leftist in the 1960's, until a friend he recommended for a job with the Black Panther Party turned up dead, allegedly murdered by the Panthers. Horowitz quickly jettisoned his Leftism and adopted archconservative politics with an

almost religious zeal. He writes gushing praises of American conservatism for taking him in despite his leftist past and enthusiastically embraces some of the most reactionary political positions imaginable out of his newfound devotion to the right. Horowitz places quotations around the word progressive when he uses the phrase progressive Left, because it's quite clear that he considers all Leftists to be anti-American. Indeed, he employs phrases like anti-American Left, racial Left and fifth-column Left interchangeably, and accuses liberals of being fellow travelers of the anti-American Left. For Horowitz, socialism inevitably leads to totalitarianism, capitalism is the only economic system compatible with democratic values, and there can be no distinction between the US government and the American people. The anti-American Left, for Horowitz, is merely a substitute term for the McCarthyite epithet Communist.

If ultimately wrong in his assumptions and provocateurish in his methods, Horowitz is nevertheless by-the-book principled in his conservatism. Which can't be said of alt.reactionary Larry Livermore, who gleefully slings the anti-American Left insult to denounce those who disagree with him. Larry likes to characterize his shift from youthful leftism to present day conservatism as simply a matter of reconsidering and rethinking his past positions, of changing his mind through thoughtful reflection. It's no coincidence though that Livermore's move from left to right occurred as head of Lookout Records, when the label's meteoric success swelled his bank account and made him a multi-millionaire. The direct correlation between the growth of Larry's conservatism and the growth of his financial portfolio speaks not to his principles but to his opportunism. Larry traded his dubiously progressive politics for financial well being, and now likes to mask his entrepreneurial sellout as the product of reason and moderation. For Larry, the phrase anti-American Left is a useful way to dismiss anyone with politics ever so slightly to his left.

Whereas Horowitz's principled if troglodytic politics are based on questionable assumptions, Larry's superficially moderate, deeply opportunistic politics are based solely on his wallet. Arguing against Livermore's professions of loyalty to the *bourgeois* social class he joined by virtue of his economic success is about as useful as debating Horowitz over unprovable assumptions instead of facts. Which is to say, not at all. Of greater utility is to consider how someone ostensibly on the Left might apply the phrase anti-American Left.

Kevin Coogan has recently written a scathing exposé of Ramsey Clark's crackpot politics and the Workers World Party's "weirdly messianic ideology" which "combined the worst aspects of Trotskyism, Maoism, and Stalinism into a unique and utterly foul brew." The series of articles ("International Action Center – 'Peace Activists' with a Secret Agenda?," "The IAC and the Campaign Against Sanctions: Helping the Iraqi People or Saddam Husayn?," "'ANSWER' and 'The Pod People'," and "The WWP: From Kim Il Sung's Birthday Party to the Russian 'Red-Brown Alliance'") can be found at Autonomedia's InterActivist Info Exchange (see http://slash.autonomedia.org/article.pl?sid=01/12/03/1946241&mode=nested&threshold=).

In "International Action Center – 'Peace Activists' with a Secret Agenda?" he decries the "entrenched knee-jerk anti-American mindset of so many on the Left" that "still insists on living in a decrepit fantasy world where criminals are good, the police are evil, blacks are noble, whites are all racist, heterosexual men are sexist, all women are victims, Israel is always 100% wrong, the Palestinians are always 100% right, America is 'objectively' reactionary, and America's enemies are 'objectively' progressive and therefore worth defending." This "testament to the existing ideological, intellectual, and moral bankruptcy of the broader Left" is more nuanced than the blanket condemnation expressed as the anti-American Left, yet not nuanced enough so that we might determine what is or is not anti-American on the Left beyond Coogan's overbroad stereotype.

To be sure, Coogan does have a general, if implied understanding of a pro-American Left, beginning of course with politics that avoid "living in a decrepit fantasy world." He supports the anti-Soviet aspects of the Hungarian 1956 uprising, with its presumed attempt to "introduce a democratic parliamentary system, and adopt an economic" [eg, market] "system that worked." Finally, he writes: "[t]here is no reason, at least in theory, why a new movement from the left could not both support a U.S.-led war against Islamist fanatics and fight to preserve civil liberties and social justice, both at home and abroad." What this amounts to is a not so progressive variation on social democracy.

Coogan's anti-American Left is largely a straw man. His "decrepit fantasy world" is hardcore Leftism that is rarely found outside of PC university enclaves and various Leninoid sects. "[L]eft/liberal groups like the National Commission for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE), the War Resisters League, the American Friends Service Committee, Women's Strike for Peace, sections of the labor movement and the peace, civil rights, 'social justice' and social gospel groups associated with the National Council of Churches; all of whom [...] form the base of the 'progressive' wing of the Democratic Party" comprise the American Left's social democratic mainstream, with ML groups like the WWP, the Revolutionary Communist Party, even the Communist Party-USA consigned to the "political margin." The largest post-Soviet split-off from the CPUSA, the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism, is also thoroughly social democratic, and needless to say this mainstream American Left is far from unified, let alone in line with the cliched "decrepit fantasy world" portrayed by Coogan. It speaks volumes of Kevin Coogan's politics that even with the effort to "reclaim patriotism" for the Left after September 11, this mainstream, social democratic American Left is still too anti-American for him. Then again, given the rumors of Coogan's friendship with Horowitz in particular, involvement with neo-conservative movements in general and pro-Zionist support of Israel, this is not surprising.

Frankly, Coogan's pro-war, pro-social justice polemics spook me. They remind me of Michael Harrington, one of the guiding lights behind the old Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, who was an avowed social democrat, yet who critically supported the Vietnam War up until 1969. Harrington publicly broke with his friend and mentor, Trotskyist turned social democrat Max Schachtman in 1970 when Schachtman endorsed Nixon's Vietnam policies, firming up his opposition to the Vietnam War in the process. Notwithstanding things like left Fascism and right Communism, there would seem to be no greater gulf then the one between the left-wing guerrilla vanguardism of the Vietnamese Communists and the right-wing theocratic militarism of "Islamic fanatics" like the Afghani Taliban. There's absolutely no comparison when it comes to the status of women or standard of living for the general population under modernizing Leninist Communism versus anti-modernist Islamic fundamentalism. Yet both persecute homosexuals, and are comparable when it comes to suppressing freedom of speech, press and assembly. Islamic fundamentalism still

can't hold a candle to the Leninist Communist murder of close to one hundred million people worldwide. Given this scorecard, social democrats like Max Schachtman and Michael Harrington opted for an anti-communism little different in its virulence from that of the Democratic and Republican Cold Warriors of their day. Assuming that Kevin Coogan was against the Vietnam War, on what basis does he saber rattle for "a U.S.-led war against Islamist fanatics" yet oppose US anti-Communist military intervention? How does Coogan justify bombing Afghanistan and overthrowing the dictatorial Taliban regime, yet presumably oppose bombing Cuba and overthrowing Castro's dictatorial regime?

There's a lot that remains vague about Coogan's politics from these four articles, yet he is the epitome of clarity when compared to Todd Gitlin, who's recent spate of opinion pieces ("Blaming America First," "Liberal Activists Finding Themselves Caught Between a Flag and a Hard Place," "Manhattan, Rising Above," "The Ordinariness of American Feelings," and "Patriotism Demands Questioning Authority") is part of the Left's effort to "reclaim patriotism" after September 11. Fortunately, Gitlin's awkwardness over his newfound patriotism has him doing a lot of liberal fence straddling, making him more cautionary and less denunciatory. Himself a critic of US foreign policy, Gitlin contends in "Blaming America First" that "something more primal and reflexive" has erupted on the American Left to produce a "kind of left-wing fundamentalism, a negative faith in America the ugly." His more measured condemnation of what he calls "soft anti-Americanism" (as opposed to the "hard anti-Americanism of bin Laden") is because of it's "myopia in the name of the weak" and its "fairy-tale pleasures of oversimplification." "Such anti-Americans, by contrast, sincerely want U.S. policies to change—though by their lights, such turnabouts are well-nigh unimaginable—but they commit the grave moral error of viewing the mass murderer (if not the mass murder) as nothing more than an outgrowth of US policy." So writes Gitlin, and he sees in this the logical conclusion that "[t]he initiative, the power to cause, is always American." US sanctions against Iraq and the US policy that built up Islamic fundamentalism in Afghanistan to counter the Soviets are condemned, but mass murderers Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden remain "an afterthought," not blamable because they are "an effect, not a cause; a symptom, not a disease." "To the left-wing fundamentalist, the only interesting or important brutality is at least indirectly the United States' doing."

Todd Gitlin's personal response to September 11 is not quite what he recommends for "the one-eyed left," but we'll get to that in a bit. Gitlin "refused to surrender the flag," refusing also to let the "furious fire of national sins and crimes burn away love of country" in order to "express solidarity with the dead, membership in a wounded nation, and affection for the community of rescue that affirmed life in the midst of death." This attempt to reclaim patriotism for the Left asserts a "badge of belonging, not a call to shed innocent blood." Oh yes, and it's also "question authority,"man. In "Between a Flag and a Hard Place" however Gitlin states "many on the left—myself included—feel varying degrees of queasiness with this war, but still forswear anti-war rallies;" thus chosing to critically support the first phase of Junior Bush's global war against international terrorism with a liberal waffle worthy of Bill Clinton. Gitlin has chosen the flag despite that leftist hard place; but he's dodging from bad to worse and back on just about everything else.

"In the United States, adherents of this kind of reflexive anti-Americanism are a minority (isolated, usually, on campuses and in coastal cities, in circles where reality checks are scarce), but they are vocal and quick to action." Gitlin further differentiates this anti-Americanism into the irredeemable ML "hard-left," irremediable liberals "still stamped by the awfulness of the Vietnam War" and subsequent ill-conceived foreign policy who see the US as "forever motivated by nothing but imperial overreach," and those consistent if misguided souls who hold the "pacifist's view that force must never be used." To this he counterpoises ever waffling liberals who "were sufficiently ambivalent about war and American power that they were reluctant to feel patriotic after September 11. But they do. The nation that was grievously wounded is theirs. [...] They are convinced that patriotism, sanctioned by international law, imparts a right of self-defense. They do not believe that love of country binds them to hot pursuit of the White House's strategies or tactics. But in the fight at hand, they share the goal of a president whom they did not, to put it mildly, support."

No straw man, one-decrepit-fantasy-world-fits-all anti-Americanism here. Gitlin's advice to the Left in turn is nothing if not Mr. Rogers sensible. He recommends that it abstain from oversimplification, face up to "America's self-contradictions," "face reality, all the mess and danger of it" and "propose what is practical;" or else face "bitter inconsequence." This in part means noting, but not gloating. The Left must note US foreign policy crimes—"collusion in the Israeli occupation, sanctions against Iraq, and support of corrupt regimes in Saudi Arabia and Egypt"—without gloating over them.

Todd Gitlin insists that the September 11 "attack stirs, in other words, patriotism—love of one's people, pride in their endurance, and a desire to keep them from being hurt anymore." I was working at my new agey Berkeley publisher before 7 in the morning on September 11 when the warehouse manager ran in shouting about a terrorist attack on New York City. Immediately, I thought of all my friends in the City. I tuned in NPR radio to hear the announcer describe the second jet strike the second World Trade Center tower. Some of my friends work at WBAI, right next door to ground zero, so I also picked up the company phone. Even with automatic redial, it took me until well past the collapse of the twin towers to get through to Sharon in Flatbush. Brooklyn. We spent the next two hours talking about what she could see right outside her window, exchanging the news and rumors we were hearing. Sharon reassured me that everyone I knew in New York was fine, except for Max. He'd just gotten off work at WBAI when the first airplane struck its tower, so he ran back into the station for a tape recorder, then dashed toward the World Trade Center, conducting interviews along the way and sustaining minor injuries when the towers collapsed.

As we spoke, my sense of personal vulnerability as well as my concern for the safety of my friends only compounded, right alongside my outrage. I grew increasingly angry that the US government's dismal record of imperial arrogance and adventurism had put me, my friends, my coworkers and neighbors, the American people in danger of terrorist murder and mayhem. Mind you, I wasn't exactly surprised by the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. I considered it highly probable that US foreign policy would provoke a murderous terrorist response on American soil sooner or later. I'd even written such a scenario into my second novel some seven years ago. I've corrected the book in this final rewrite needless to say, simply substituting September 11 for my science fiction event. I still marvel at how people got together to help each other in the face of such horrific mass murder, in classic expressions of solidarity and mutual aid. But I'm

also still enraged over the government's blatant disregard for the safety of the people it claims to protect, not to mention my own powerlessness to change the government's arrogance and negligence. Malcolm X's remarks about the chickens coming home to roost leapt immediately to mind as I talked to Sharon on that fateful day.

What's more, every bellicose action Junior Bush and Company take to preserve the American empire by "fighting terrorism" only increases the certainty that the American people, my community, my friends and myself will be targeted for future terrorist attacks. No flaming red commie, *San Francisco Chronicle* staff writer on Europe, Frank Viviano writes: "The war on terrorism is, ipso facto, a defense of an entire lifestyle that could not exist without fossil fuels and their byproducts. It's also, by default, a collective action by the United States and its allies to protect the operations of the multinational energy giants—with linkages encompassing the world's stock markets, gross national products, employment rates and currency exchange values." (12-30-01, *SF Chronicle*) The US government, not America, "values only unbridled power in the service of untrammeled capital," to borrow from Gitlin. To keep my country from further harm, I must oppose my government. To protect the American people, the US government must be stopped.

All of this without once mentioning that the US government is merely the executive committee for America's capitalist ruling class…

I wrote about the high potential for massive American casualties in Junior Bush's global war against international terrorism several issues ago. I don't want it to happen. Given the imperial character of US foreign policy however, as well as the long list of countries Junior Bush intends to assail militarily in order to fight terrorism, I consider a growing number of American body bags inevitable. Inevitable, but not at all desirable. Many of my high school friends wound up in the military during the Vietnam War, and quite a few never got out alive. Whereas most of my fellow anti-Vietnam war protesters branded American GI's "baby killers," I joined the Vietnam Veterans Against the War's civilian auxiliary, the Winter Soldier Organization, to work with Vietnam vets. I firmly believe the rank-and-file anti-war rebellion inside the US military was instrumental in ending US military intervention in southeast Asia. I have absolutely no desire to see American troops slaughtered to shore up US imperial interests around the world, and I'm incredibly pissed off that the US government exploits naïve American kids as cannon fodder to secure US global domination. Add to this the thousands of American civilians already dead and bound to die in terrorism directed against this country, multiply that by the mountain of Third World corpses US military actions will pile up in this world war against terrorism, and outrage doesn't begin to express how I feel.

It doesn't really help that social revolution in this country might be a consequence of all this. Apocalyptic barbarism is the more likely outcome. In closing, I do highly recommend Kevin Coogan's blistering dissection of the WWP/IAC on the lunatic Leninoid Left, even as I question his politics. He mentions yours truly in "'ANSWER' and 'The Pod People'," getting my political affiliation right to boot. No doubt in Coogan's scheme of things, I'm one of the "WWP's radical critics" on the "fringe Left" with "views that are almost as wacky as those of the WWP." That's not just because I disagree with him on Hungary and argue that 1956 was an aborted council communist revolution, complete with workers councils in the factories and an army prepared for partisan warfare against the Soviets. I take off from Randolph Bourne's famous phrase and insist that, whether couched as self-defense or a fight against Islamist fanatics, war is the health of capital and the state.

I wasn't at all happy about how I dealt with the revolt against work in my column on small group organizing. I hope to return to the subject in time for May Day. Next issue, I guess it's dinosaurs and mammals.

ALL POWER TO THE PRETZEL!

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... You can find the "lost" Hooligan column at the new, improved http://www.huahuacoyotl.com. To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligan3@mindspring.com.

Patience is a virtue after all.

Tonight at the dinner table, I noticed something on my girl's fingers, something that had not been there a minute prior, something that resembled the dark kale we were eating, something that I didn't want smeared everywhere, so I asked Ernesto to wipe her hand off because he was closer to her than I was.

Whenever I aim to wipe food from her hands, I usually just lick it off instead of getting up off my lazy ass and grabbing a napkin or towel. That's why I was so impatient with Ernesto's "No, I'm sitting here eating" response. I blurted, "Just lick it off! It's no big deal. Hurry! I don't want her smearing kale all over the next thing she touches."

I was so impatient that I don't think I even finished my last few words before I was grabbing for her hand across the table. I didn't look at her hand; I already saw that there were two blobs of kale between her fingers. I just shoved it into my mouth and licked it off. One lick is all it took for me to immediately cease my impatience.

"UUGGGGHHHHHH!" I wailed, mouth gaping open and paralyzed, "It's shit, not kale!" I ran to the sink and washed my mouth out with soap three times. Ohmygod, ohmygod, ohmygod, my brain was in shock, my nose in horror and my tongue numb—not the kind of *ouch-my-leg-fell-asleep-pins-and-needles* numb, but the kind of numb that makes you think you just permanently disabled all of your taste buds. I do have to tell you, though, that shit smells worse than it tastes, but maybe that's because it does indeed render your taste buds null and void—at least for a little while.

To tell you that I was so grossed out is an understatement. I just couldn't figure out how I'd gobbled an innocent poo poo hand. I mean, she had only left the dinner table for a few seconds when she went to get her favorite book from her room. How had she shat *and* manually investigated it so quickly? I thought that she had only been out of our sight for less than a minute. Was the kale, potato, leek soup so good that I time warped? The leaving the dinner table part makes sense because she usually hides when she's pooping, but it's never quick. And she's never burgled a turd from her diaper before! Tonight was definitely a night of firsts—very confusing, repulsive firsts. And it didn't stop there. It was a battle getting that very shitty diaper changed. When I picked her up to carry her to her room, she bit me on the shoulder. When I laid her down on her

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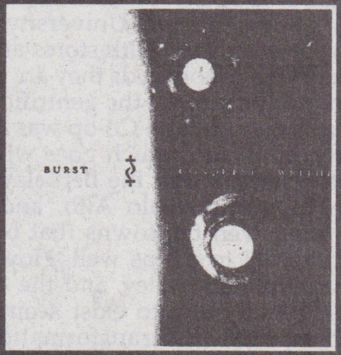

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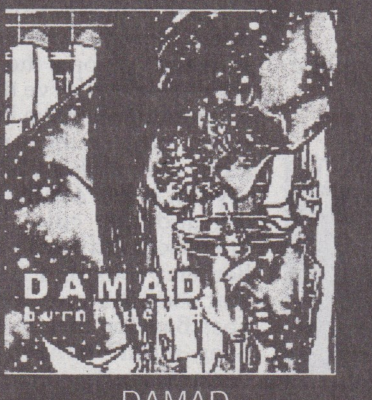

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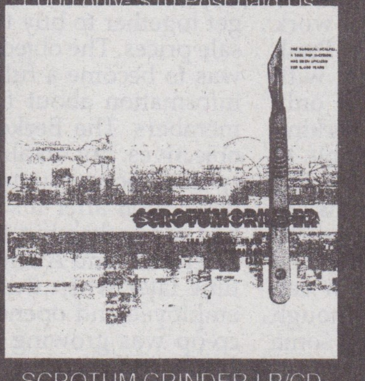

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bed, she kicked me. When I got close to look her in the eyes, she hit me. And of course, she was cracking up laughing the whole time.

What in the hell was happening? (I still don't know.) Dumb ass candid camera? Ernesto heard every syllable of my desperation and came to my rescue. I sat back down to finish my now less than tasty soup. My taste buds were working again, but with much less pleasure.

Ernesto got her and everything else all cleaned up and we all resumed to our semblance of normal. Katie came over for soup, there was a fire kickin' in the backyard, people were starting to congregate.

Ernesto brought our girl up from the backyard fire when she was ready to see me again. She, Katie, and I started playing around. She's in that very independent "I do it myself" stage (she's almost two years old) so she wouldn't let me help her take her jacket off. Somehow, she managed to get both of her hands stuck behind her back and lose her balance at the same time. Whap! Face first on the hard wood floor.

I scooped her up and found a bloodied nose and mouth. Needless to say, my wacky motherly licking instinct kicked into gear again. I didn't want to waste any time fetching a towel; I wanted to immediately see what was bleeding. Teeth? Tongue? Lips? Nose? So, with two big swathes of my primate tongue, I cleared the bloodied way to discover a tooth-punctured lower lip.

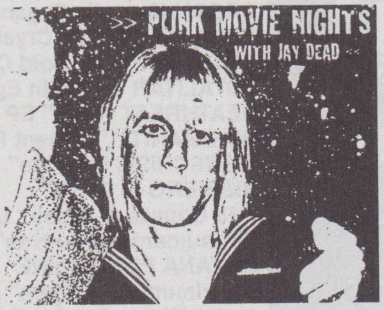
Poor baby. All she whimpered was, "Ice, ice." She's smart—she knows simple first aid—she's whapped herself good before.

And she's pretty tough; she was up playing again after I insisted on 20 minutes of ice play and the swelling had subsided.

I don't know if my licking habit is either smart or tough. It might only be impatience, or perhaps it's instinctual. But I'll take blood over shit any day, just hopefully not both in the same day again. And I swear I don't have any GG records.

Punkparents, get in touch. PO Box 12839 / Gainesville, FL 32604 or yardwideyarns@hotmail.com

Short Film Fest at Gilman



I recently found out about a pretty exciting idea some of the folks at Gilman came up with: a short film fest that will be taking place in mid-March. This will be the first one, and hopefully there will be more to come, which is what the organizers had in mind when they decided to put the work into bringing this concept to fruition. Unlike the Punk Movie Night show that I had a hand in organizing with Jake at Gilman, this night will probably consist of only short films, so if you have something you've been working on, or if you've finished a film and have been unable to show it to an audience, then this may be your opportunity to do it the punk way. I am always encouraging punks to at least try their hand at film, and I'm going to again because if this is going to be a regular event at Gilman, then they are going to need more films in the future. DIY can apply to more forms of creativity than just music, although a short film, especially a DIY one, can always use some cool music...hint, hint.

If you were wondering about when we might be planning to have the second Punk Movie Night, the one that combines films, music, and spoken word, then I can safely say that it will most likely be in the fall of 2002. We really want to make sure than there is more of an emphasis on film, and also a bit more hands-on participation by the filmmakers themselves. This doesn't mean that you shouldn't start contacting me now, because the earlier we plan such things, the better. To find out more about the short film fest at Gilman, write the Crimson Baboon at: sketch314@aol.com or to contact me about a future Punk Movie Night show, write me at the snail mail address listed at the end of this column.

A Closer Look

Last summer I began to notice differences in my appearance. Signs of aging were everywhere, but only when I searched hard enough in the mirror to see them. If I stood a step or two back from the mirror they became undetectable. It's still easy to ignore these changes, but the day will come when I won't be able to, regardless of my proximity to them. Sometimes when I'm walking down my favorite streets in Berkeley I'll find myself searching for the reasons why this town doesn't look or feel the same as it once did. It's familiar enough to still call it home, but I fear that it's changing at a pace that might someday render it unrecognizable to me. Nothing stays the same, I know, but that doesn't mean I have to accept change regardless of what might be lost. I used to think that the change I felt had more to do with what I was feeling on a personal level than it did with what was actually happening in the city of Berkeley. Now I realize that it wasn't just that I was being self-centered, but it's something that's visible to anyone who wishes to see it. It's there when I pass what used to be the old Berkeley Co-op stores, and instead of the community centers that attempted to serve the broad range of people who call Berkeley home, all I see now are overpriced gourmet grocery stores that cater to the wealthy few and are too expensive for a majority of Berkeley's residents. In the locations of the former University and Telegraph co-ops, the corporate chain health stores are not only unable to serve the very neighborhoods they are located in, but they have been at the center of the gentrification taking place in those neighborhoods. The Co-op was much more than a chain of grocery stores, which goes without saying, and it's influence extended past the Berkeley border and into cities like El Cerrito, Palo Alto, and San Francisco. Maybe that's why even the towns that border Berkeley look and feel different to me as well. How is it that something so meaningful to Berkeley, and the entire East Bay for that matter, could cease to exist seemingly over night? What lead up to this transformation in Berkeley's urban landscape? Well, I decided to dig up some old Co-op newsletters to see if I could find out.

The Berkeley Co-op began in 1936 as the Berkeley Buyers' Club. It started as a small group of families who'd get together to buy their groceries cooperatively at wholesale prices. The objective of the club from the earliest stages was to become a full fledged cooperative, and to provide information about food standards and ingredients to its members. The Berkeley Buyer's Club not only had clear objectives, but an already established tight knit community that became very active in all areas of the BBC's business. Soon after it's inception, the Berkeley Buyers' Club had a membership that outnumbered the older Oakland, Allendale, and Alameda Buyer's Clubs. It was only a short time later when the Berkeley Buyers' Club hired its first employee and opened its first store at 2491 Shattuck. The co-op was growing so fast that it wasn't long before the 2491 space became too small. Due to this growth, and because of some troubles they were having with a nearby business owner, the Berkeley Buyers' Club found a new

space at 1715 University Avenue. In 1938 the Berkeley Buyers' Club took one of its first political stands. It drew up a resolution that condemned the destruction of perfectly edible oranges. The resolution asked President Roosevelt to distribute the oranges to families on relief.

In 1940 the Berkeley Buyers' Club was on the move again. The new location was just down the street from the University store. That location would become the Berkeley Co-op's flagship center for the rest of its existence. Across the street from their newest center, on the corner, was a gas station owned by the Berkeley Cooperative Union. The BCU was the first to introduce unleaded gas in California. The Berkeley Buyers' Club newsletter lent support to BCU gas stations by running articles describing the effects of lead poisoning. The BCU and the Berkeley Buyers' Club shared more than similar politics. Many members of the Berkeley Buyers' Club also did double duty in the BCU. The majority of their members, especially the BCU membership, came from Berkeley's Finnish community. The Finnish influence was so great that one grand opening ceremony for a Co-op hardware store was done in both Finnish and English. And afterwards, traditional Finnish refreshments were served, and traditional Finnish music played in the background.

The Co-op continued to flourish until the onset of World War II. The United States' entry into the war threatened the Co-op's very existence. There were gas and tire shortages during war time, so the Co-op opened branch stores in North and South Berkeley to assure accessibility to its members that were unable to drive. As the Co-op began to take major financial losses, there was a feeling amongst membership that the Co-op might have to come to an end. The Co-op newsletter ran articles that carried titles like "Shall We Fail?" The only thing that could save the Co-op would be an end to the war, and it finally happened. By 1947 the Co-op had recovered financially, and soon after they merged with their allies in the BCU.

The Co-op recovered and continued to grow, and soon it was expanding into neighboring communities. A 25 mile limit was set, and sites in El Cerrito, Marin, Oakland, and San Francisco were all being discussed as possible locations for new Co-op centers. At the end of 1962, four new stores opened. There was a store on Telegraph Avenue and it did well right away, while the Castro Valley and Walnut Creek stores struggled, and a the small Co-op on Shattuck Avenue at Vine seemed to fall short of what was expected of it. In spite of any shortcomings, the Co-op membership grew to 30,000 members. In 1963 the El Cerrito Co-op opened its doors at a location that could not only serve El Cerrito's wealthier residents, but that could also be accessible to the working class and poor of nearby South Richmond and the unincorporated annexed neighborhoods.

My grandmother used to live a block from the Co-op in El Cerrito. The El Cerrito center was the first one that was designed and constructed from scratch. The effect, as I remember it, was that it used to feel like a block sized portion of Berkeley had been uprooted, modernized, then dropped down next to the freeway on Potrero Avenue. My grandmother was a conservative Mexican-American woman from a small Indian town in Southern Colorado, and the Co-op's political views were of little interest to her. The bottom line, however, was that my grandmother didn't like to leave her home, much less her neighborhood. So what really appealed to her was the convenience of the El Cerrito Coop center. It was located a block from her home, and it was a one stop center where she could accomplish most of her errands in one short trip. Testimony to this was that after moving from her duplex in El Cerrito to an almost identical duplex in Richmond, my grandmother almost never even leaves her home. The closest store was not only too far of a walk, but even when she got a ride it was just the first of many stops she now had to make. Finally, she just left it up to her children to run those errands for her.

The Co-op had made it a point over the years to stay neutral when it came to political races. That position came about as a result of some legal trouble the Berkeley Buyers' Club got into during the early years. By the mid-60s, younger members were questioning the definition of this neutrality. They argued that the Co-op should only remain neutral when it came to supporting political candidates. These members felt that the Co-op, as a part of the community, had a responsibility to take stands about political issues that were of interest to the surrounding communities, such as the Free-Speech Movement and Civil Rights. Many of the older, conservative members were against the idea of getting involved in activist politics. They proposed to maintain a conservative approach to such matters. They could not in the end avoid involvement in many of the conflicts and uprisings to take place over the years, at both a local and national level. Some Co-op highlights from those years include the hiring of more black employees in its stores, being the first to sell biodegradable detergent, producing a low-cost cookbook, lobbying for the creation of a fair packaging and labeling law, reaching the 50,000 membership mark, and donating food to the Black Panther Party's Children's Breakfast Program.

The environment in Berkeley and the rest of the East Bay has changed in ways that aren't easily understood unless you've spent most of your life here exploring its tree-lined streets, as well as the barren, unpaved streets of its disappearing industrial neighborhoods. Even attending school here can be an experience that would be hard to duplicate in other cities. Can you imagine an elementary classroom full of young African American boys who talk non-stop about one day becoming members of the Black Panther Party? If they were ever asked why, they'd likely respond with memorized rhetoric such as, "Black folks need a revolution." Even a pale faced kid like myself could feel the influence that organizations like the Panthers had in my neighborhood. For example, free lunch programs existed that were directly inspired by the Panthers' breakfast programs. Many years later I crossed paths with former Panther leader Eldridge Cleaver, who demanded my seat at a cafe when I beat him to the last available chair. I just shook my head, because I knew, like all kids who grew up in these parts, that Cleaver had become a pig a long time ago. Fortunately I didn't have to tell him that to his face, because some old hippie relinquished his seat when he realized that the tall grey-haired man with the African walking stick was none other than the author of *Soul On Ice*.

The 1970s were the beginning of the end for the Berkeley Co-op. The Co-op began an expansion that would theoretically allow the Co-op to compete with larger chain grocery stores around the Bay Area. This new objective would actually lead to the hiring of a general manager from outside of the Co-op membership, which should have been a clear sign that the Co-op had strayed dangerously far from its roots in the community. The new business-minded general manager caused a division to take place between membership and leadership, even though it had been that unity which had allowed the Co-op to survive so many of the previous threats to its existence. What followed wasn't a healing of any festering wounds, but a proposed a plan to take over the management of an already existing chain of stores. Outraged members and employees banded together to give their new general manager the boot. He was gone but not forgotten, because he left behind

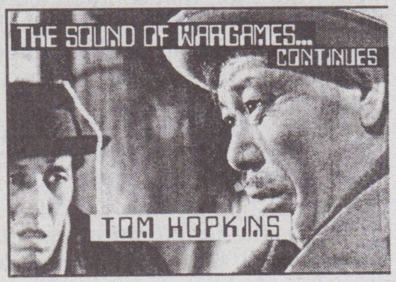
a $217,000 loss for the year of 1976. A domino effect had begun, that would result in a $760,000 loss in 1978. In spite of those financial disasters, the Co-op made significant contributions in the 70s. On the first Earth Day, which took place in 1970; the Coop and the Berkeley Ecology Center began recycling, and the Berkeley City Council made the Co-op the its first recycling depot. The Coop banned enzymes from its detergent, and condom information was handed out at all Co-op centers. The Co-op banned talc-coated rice, and food labels were redesigned to include detailed information about a product's contents.

I was familiar with the Co-op from a very early age because my mother and other members of my family were members. My brother and I used to play in the children's area while our mom shopped, and when we were a bit older we'd escape the adult supervision for short periods, and we'd graze on the barrel-shaped bins of carob-covered munchies. Carob was a treat, but my brother and I had a serious hate for the natural peanut butter that members would make right there in the store. My mom usually shopped at the El Cerrito and University Avenue centers. As the years went by, I became fascinated with the political flyers that were stapled to the outdoor kiosks at the El Cerrito center, and the bulletin boards and telephone poles at the Berkeley Co-ops. The Co-op also functioned as a social services building, allowing access to food stamps within a few feet from the Coop when most other chain grocery stores looked down on the use of food stamps. By having that service available, it put shoppers at ease at about having to use food stamps, and it's even more significant when one considers the options available to food stamp users today. In the East Bay, canned food outlets have replaced the Co-ops and the family-run local markets that have all but disappeared, and the result is that there is a lower quality of service and nutrition for the families of food stamp users, not to mention the negation of direct involvement in their communities.

By the time that Reagan was moving into the White House, the Co-op was failing, and stores were being closed throughout the Bay Area. The Co-op was reduced, until finally all that was left was the University Avenue center. This reduction might have been saved it if it had been carried out sooner, but unfortunately it was a day late and a dollar short. Amazingly, the members raised $200,000 to help save the Co-op. In an attempt to salvage the Berkeley Co-op, a vote was held to open leadership to employees. The idea of a worker-owned Berkeley Co-op followed the examples set by collectives created in the 70s. For reasons that are still debatable, the Coop was unable to continue after 50 years of existence.

A decade later I still find myself shaking my head at the effect this has had on all the former Co-op locations. As the 90s began, the loss of the Co-op and the resulting changes weren't that noticeable, unless you were closely scrutinizing them. These days you'd have to be blind not to see them, and the even more frightening trend of allowing corporate conglomerates such as Starbucks to in effect usurp the position of city planner. If the composition that I once knew as Berkeley was a jigsaw puzzle, then one could describe the changes I see and feel when walking its streets as encountering the empty spaces where pieces of that puzzle once connected. There is no question really about what will take the place of those pieces of our puzzle that are now gone forever, but the real question is how many the remaining pieces can we hold onto now that decomposition has begun.

To send relevant correspondence to this column, or whatever,you can write: Jay, PMB 419, 1442A Walnut Street, Berkeley, CA 94709 or to check out older columns you can point your evil computer browsers to: www.wethepunx.com.



Toot toot! It's time to dust off the long neglected label spotlight feature. The most recent label to take the role of having the knack of coming along at just the right time to document a particular area/ sound/ group of friends is City Boot Records. Dan Africa runs this label from Frisco's Tenderloin and answered my questions through email.

What records has City Boot released?
The first release was the self titled STAIRCASE 7" last year. Then the UNDER A DYING SUN and the BOX THE COMPASS 7"s were released around summertime this year. And recently I had my hand in THE SHIVERING/FUNERAL DINER split LP.

Who is involved with the label?
Right now the label is just me, though a couple of the bands have been helping me get 7" covers screened and putting packaging together. Doing a lot of the packaging by hand takes an extremely long time and without their help, it would never get done. I would say the bands are very much a part of the label with all their efforts to get things done.

What came first, the idea to start a label or a record that needed to be put out?
The thought of being a part of a DIY label has always been an interest of mine, but it was the kids in STAIRCASE and their music that drove me to put out that first 7". To me, that record "needed" to be put out.

The UNDER A DYING SUN EP has elaborate packaging and (what sounds to be) careful sound engineering. Does the $3 price come close to paying for everything?
Almost, but $3 does fall short of the overall costs. That 7" is an art project. From the recording to getting the inserts printed, these were all done through some friends in one form or another. Also, taking the time to hand screen all the covers ourselves definitely cut cost, but in all honesty, this record wasn't about breaking even. Everything about this record, from the music to the packaging, is what I want to represent City Boot Records. Elaborate packaging and heartfelt music is what is this vinyl is all about.

Have your records gotten very far out of California yet?
Yeah, this past summer was pretty successful. The UNDER A DYING SUN tour went all the way to the East Coast and back with their record, the BOX THE COMPASS 7" and the STAIRCASE release. FUNERAL DINER and STAIRCASE took their records all the way to the opposite coast on their US tour. Mailorder has been great about getting records to the Midwest and to the East Coast. I have some friends in Japan who even found some releases in their record stores in Tokyo.

The presentation of your label and the sounds of the bands remind me of the Repercussion label and bands. Do you see any similarities? Did that label or those bands have any influence on you?
Repercussion, the bands and their releases, are (I feel) some of the greatest records ever. I do see many similarities, with the packaging and the overall sound, but mostly the DIY ethic of the label is what I would like to associate with City Boot Records. Repercussion has left some lasting impression with me.

Were there any planned City Boot records that fell through?
Nothing has fallen through yet. I'm keeping my fingers

crossed.

Are any of the City Boot releases going to make it to CD?

I'm not planning on putting anything out on CD, I'll try to keep the label strictly vinyl for the time being, though some of the future releases will be available on CD through different labels other than City Boot Records.

Any other small/new labels people should look out for?

Keep an eye out for Into the Hurricane. This label/distro carries a lot of great records and has some new releases in the near future. Social Deviant, down in Southern California, has a lot of records available and some long awaited up and coming releases. Also Unfun Records out of the Bay Area, are doing a great job of putting out some new and amazing bands.

What else is coming up?

Right now City Boot Records is teaming up with Unfun Records to put out a six-song 7" by a band out of South Carolina called SENNEVAL. This band is redefining chaotic hardcore with a political edge and should be available within the next month. THE BOX THE COMPASS 10" will be their second release and promise to bring out the best, picking up where the 7" left off. Look for that around the first of the year, with label help from Substandard Records. Also in the new year, the UNDER A DYING SUN LP already in the works is shot for a February release, again with the help of Substandard Records. And as we speak, I'm pulling together a double 7" comp. with some really great bands, that over the past two year touring with UNDER A DYING SUN I've had the chance to meet and become friends with. Right now, the Bay Area's own TIME IN MALTA is confirmed, UNDER A DYING SUN, SENNEVAL and the most amazing group of kids out of Tokyo, Japan called ENDZWECK. I think that's it.

City Boot Records, 575 O'Farrell St., Apt. 604, San Francisco, CA 94102

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Buy the HOT CROSS *New Set Of Lungs* 10" (Robodog, 12001 Aintree Lane, Retson, VA 20191), it's the cure for our collective summertime screamo blues. No rushed and muddled songs dragged through the mud on the way to the recording studio. Even better, clear/decipherable vocals. Master tone in the bass and dual guitar wizardry command just enough different tempo and time changes. These five Yankees have the finesse and fury of CABLE and BOTCH, but no harsh edges. Mixed in is some tweaked EXCELSIOR and DEAD MEADOW field running rock along with solid success at new twists to the slow/fast, loud/quiet square dance. In addition to the well executed simplicity of theme in the design, the lyrics convey a sense of frustration and disdain for day-to-day pettiness that resonates strongly with me. I'm looking for a new set of lungs.

The 1985 releases I last heard shared the precision rhythm of their new *Long Weekend* EP (Monoton Studio, www.monotonstudio.de) but didn't have the same electro-heartbeat. Electronic drums, hand claps, and synth-pulse filter through later day Albini worship. Neo-new wave with a smile. GSL on Prozac.

Mildly chaotic guitar and a circling bass rock back and forth over slightly choppy waves throughout the three GUNMEN & FLIGHT PATHS songs on the *Songs Named After States* EP ($3.50, Alone, PO Box 3019, Oswego, NY 13126) Gainesville-fans might hear PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS and 12 HOUR TURN pushing against the first ICONOCLAST EP. So yeah, an emo-style RORSCHACH tribute.

Welcome back to the delightful BOOKS LIE, whose guitar has all the swizzle of SWIZ! Throaty hardcore with energy and hooks sure to get you doing the slide boogie in your room, basement, backyard, or local venue that has about two shows left in it. Two electro 21st century dance numbers that aren't thrown together, but don't make too much sense to me. But I'm a square who finds the song titles "Young MC5" and "Thanks Easter Bunny" as impressive as the rest of the old timey music on the *I Felt Like Such A Loser…* EP (Level Plane, PO Box 280, NYC, NY 10276)

I'm certain that anyone who got a hold of the TIPPING CANOE/ETIL VRYE LP will be eager to put a copy of the TIPPING CANOE LP (Forge, PO Box 3601, Woodbridge, CT 06525) on the wheels of steel. Yo! Slightly muted but brassy guitar racket with a loose bass and drum wander. The tempo has the push of the WILLIAM MARTYR 17/PLUNGER split and the first PORTRAITS OF PAST release and is framed by the speaking/strained vocal trade. "Tom, what the fuck are you talking about?" Easy, Spencer! TIPPING CANOE is along the lines of FUNERAL DINER, STAIRCASE and other '95 revivalists.

Everybody loves a theme, just ask the prom committee. The VIDA BLUE's theme of their *Comprehensive List Of Everyone Who Has Ever Done Anything Wrong To Us* LP (Level Plane) is executed between songs by a feminine Stephen Hawking voice reading through their comprehensive list. Sorry, no inclusion of "the meanie who ate the last vegan saltpeter cookie" or "the boy with the SPITBOY patch who left the toilet seat up." They do mention the GET UP KIDS, however. If they had written a list of things they hate, I don't think they could put the GRATEFUL DEAD on there. The VIDA BLUE's loose, fluid, and expansive sound is the jam band style, brothers and sisters. Jagged guitar sweeps down the river under the direction of several vocalists. The bass and drum paddle backwards enough for trippy interludes to open and allow some punch in. This isn't a la la la, warm sunshine on your face record, it's moody and almost desperate. But, I'd be happy to pay for the VIDA BLUE's studio time to record a cover of "Box Of Rain."

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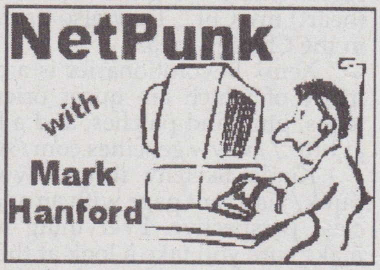
All the goods can be sent to PO Box 11661, Berkeley, CA 94712.



I spent some time looking for homo-punk, queer-punk, whatever-you-wanna-call-it-core websites for this month's issue. Since my personal orientation runs towards straight, chances are I've missed some of the best ones, but these are the sites that I thought looked pretty good. None of these sites are pornographic (those are easy to find), though some might contain erotic images.

Probably one of the best resources for finding queer sites on the net has to be the Holy Titclamps site. Larry-bob has put together an amazing collection of links, along with tour dates for queer bands, queer things to do in SF, rants, reviews, archives of old issues of the paper *Holy Titclamps*. You must visit this site—http://www.holytitclamps.com/ .

Gayscape (http://www.gayscape.com/) is a directory service, sorta like Yahoo, but everything in it is queer-related and non-pornographic in nature. Categories are broken up by state and country, as well as by type of resource. You'll find health info, personal websites, entertainment resources, and more.

I've mentioned the main ZNet site before as an alternative news resource, and they have a whole section dedicated to queer issues. ZNet's Queer Watch (http://www.zmag.org/queerwatch.htm) has the latest in queer news, as well as links to activist organizations for the bi, gay, lesbian,

and transgender communities.

Youth.org (http://www.youth.org/) is an online community for queer youth. It offers a moderated newsgroup, links to other youth sites, and information for queer-curious kids. It also is the home of P.E.R.S.O.N., which is an organization dedicated to getting a positive images of people with different sexual orientations into the public schools.

The Wobblies have a queer labor page at http://www.iww.org/queer/ . Not a lot of info here, but there is some interesting historical notes about queer Wobblies and a few links to other queer-oriented I.W.W. and labor sites.

The Queer Liberation Front (http://www.queerliberation.org/) is a direct action movement that encourages people to setup their own chapters of the organization in their town. They state that they "believe that gender, sex, and sexuality are fluid and limitless rather than fixed and limited." You can download their propaganda (flyers and sticker templates), find out how to create your own chapter of the organization, and also get info on the Richmond Queer Space Project.

On the entertainment side of things, Dyxploitation (http://www.dyxploitation.nu/) offers "entertainment for lezzies and their pals." This is sorta like *The Onion* for dykes. Everything reads like a news item, but is so over the top that it's funny. In addition, their disclaimer states that if you visit, or even know about their website, then you're a lesbian. Congratulations!

Shades Beyond Gray (http://www.shadesbeyondgray.com/) is a queer/pansexual erotic journal that is made up entirely of submissions. You'll find erotic images, columns, poetry, prose, links and archives from every sexual perspective, all presented in a tasteful, non-porno manner. This has a little something for every(kinky)one.

DykeDiva.com (http://www.dykediva.com/) is "the alternative lesbian" site. This site contains information and reviews of movies, sex, and sex-movies, a message board, reviews, and a regular column on masturbation called "I (heart) my Clit." They also have a listing of lesbian events in the Chicago area.

Xerox Revolutionaries is a cool source for punk zines, many of which are queer oriented. They also have mix tapes, pins, and patches, and a list of links. Check 'em out at http://www.geocities.com/xeroxrevdistro/.

Kinda Sketchy (http://www.geocities.com/stompinpunk/) is a rant page with an anarchist, queercore, working class perspective. Everything here is worth reading, but make sure you take a look at the manifesto.

Drub (http://www.drubskin.com/) is a queer skinead site with free artwork, some music reviews, rants, and interviews, and a list of links dealing with sex, skins, scooters, punk and more. Check out the link to the queer skinhead webring on the opening page to find a whole bunch more skin stuff.

Tom Jennings has made all of the issues of his late-80s/early-90s zine *Homocore* available online at http://www.wps.com/HOMOCORE/ . The issues are scanned as images and each page is a big download if you have a slow connection, but they are readable and a good archive of the zine.

Punk Queers is a Yahoo! Club for LGBTG punk rockers. It is a forum where you can post and chat about any issue you want without fear of being hassled for your orientation. You have to join to use it, but it looks like a pretty good networking spot to find like-minded people. You'll find it on Yahoo! at http://clubs.yahoo.com/clubs/punkqueers .

The queerpunk mailing list is also available at Yahoo!. To get information about subscribing, visit http://groups.yahoo.com/group/queerpunk/ . While boasting something like 300 members, it looks like most are inactive, as the statistics for the list show only about 100 messages a month.

Anyway, that's gonna do it for this month. Hopefully there is something worthwhile here for everyone. Let me know if I missed a major site, or give me some other sites (queer or not) to check out or review. Email netpunk@diehippiedie.com, or visit my columns online at http://www.diehippiedie.com/netpunk/ .

RALL DEAL

Students of war propaganda will naturally wonder if all or some of that famous Osama bin Laden video was faked. It's interesting to note that more than 60 years after the Battle of France, few people are aware that the famous clip of Hitler dancing in jubilation over the capture of Paris was fucked with; Allied editors looped the celluloid to transform a single backward step into a well-remembered, utterly fraudulent, manic jig.

Assuming that the latest Osama Live video is real, it proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that bin Laden (a) had prior knowledge of September 11 and (b) was pleased as punch that so many Americans had met Allah that day. The tape is, however, notable for a major conversational omission. One would have expected the subject of the fourth hijacked plane's target to come up—was it the White House, Air Force One (as the Bushies so lamely floated on September 12), or the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame? Don't be surprised if bonus "previously unreleased" scenes have been added when the DVD version comes out.

"The video *is* authentic," said German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder. "It proves that bin Laden and his terror band were behind this." But even if authentic, the tape hardly proves that bin Laden funded, planned or directed 9-11. Another organization may have notified him of their intentions, à la "dude, you won't *believe* the shit we've got planned." Advance knowledge of a terrorist act is reprehensible and Osama is evidently a vile sack of dung for dancing on the graves of innocents, but advance knowledge does not automatically equal full responsibility. "We had notification since the previous Thursday that the event would take place that day," bin Laden says on the tape. Whether that information came to him from an Al Qaeda subordinate or another group is an open question.

For the sake of argument, let's set logic aside for the next few hundred words. Let's say that this tape does in fact provide sufficient beyond-a-reasonable-doubt evidence to convict bin Laden of mass murder in an American court. Even then, at best it's retroactive proof used to justify a punishment meted out without justification at the time.

Back in late September, the Bushies demanded that the Taliban turn over bin Laden, claiming that while they had proof of his culpability, they wouldn't deign to turn it over to the government from whom they were demanding extradition. Their refusal to give up Osama became the pretext for a bombing campaign that ultimately drove the Taliban from power. Justice was served, courtesy of F-16s and B-52s.

It's a brilliant strategy, one that Josef Goebbels would have admired. Do whatever the hell you want, then later prove that you were right all along. It's the ultimate exploitation of a society whose idea of historical memory is "what did I have for breakfast?"

Bush seized the presidency exactly the same way. Rather than await the results of a recount that might have resulted in a Democratic victory, the Bushies bullied their way into the White House by sending jock thugs to threaten Florida election officials and corrupting their GOP allies on the Supreme Court. Months after assuming office, the Republicans cited independent recounts conducted by newspapers as proof that they'd won all along. In Bush's dyslexic world, the ends *precede* the means.

Life in the United States since January 20, and more so since September 11, has involved wallowing in the kind of guessing games that thrive under third-world autocracies. Where's the president hiding? Has the vice-president been dead for months or is he secretly running the country? Is the deli guy on vacation or awaiting sentencing from a military tribunal? The Osama video merely raises more questions to be hashed out at nation's xerox machines, water coolers, and bars. Did the CIA *really* have any proof before they scored the tape? What, if anything, is missing? Bush has warned Americans that they'll never know the whole story about the Afghan-Somali-Iraqi-wherever's-next War. As a result, more and more Americans watch the BBC and read the websites of foreign newspapers for news about their own country.

As for everyone else, Bush's Theory of Retroactivity has taken the political process by storm. If you win an election after you steal it, were you ever really a usurper? If your illegal war turns out to be justified, how can anyone say you were wrong?

The future potential for this strategy seems limitless. Whenever the IRS runs short of cash, they could steal people's money out of their bank accounts and write a tax law to justify the theft later on. Executing people without bothering to convict them of a crime might seem harsh or even immoral, but it gives prosecutors decades to come up with some horrible crime they'd committed.

I wonder: will this help me justify missed column deadlines?

P.S. I've been pretty busy on the book front. My graphic novel *2024*, which is a parody of Orwell's *1984* and a takedown of American consumer culture, is going into its second printing in hardback, and there's now a more affordable paperback version ($9.95) available. My collection of cartoons, the same ones that run in MRR, is still around; it's called *Search and Destroy* (after the Iggy LP, not the zine since a few have asked). You can get them from any decent bookstore or online through rall.com.

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COMING SOON: In May, a 112-page hardback called *To Afghanistan and Back,* which includes my essays filed from Afghanistan, cartoons about the war, photos from my trip, and a 50-page graphic travelogue in cartoon form. It's $15.95, and you can order online through rall.com starting in April; I still don't know if the publisher will do a paperback version. Anyway, it's the first-ever "instant" graphic novel and I'm working on page 21 of the graphic novel as I write this. So far, so good.

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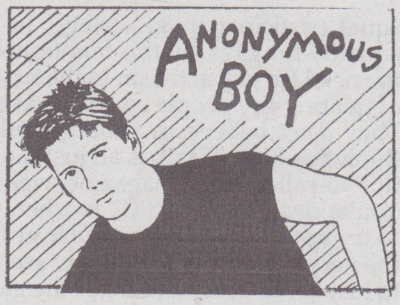
ALSO COMING SOON: In June, a 128-page paperback called *Attitude: The New Subversive Political Cartoonists*, an anthology of progressive, smart political cartoons by 21 artists that I'm really excited about. It includes such artists as Tom Tomorrow ("This Modern World"), Ruben Bolling ("Tom the Dancing Bug"), Derf ("The City") and Stephanie McMillan ("Minimum Security"). There's an interview of each cartoonist, as well as photos from their childhood and previously-unpublished book; it's a great opportunity to find out about cartoonists whose work your local paper may not run. Advance ordering information is through nbmpublishing.com.



Militant Homosexual Activists. Who are they? Where are they? Why have I never come across any of these people? I've heard about them on TV and in the newspapers, but I've never actually seen any. "Sure you have," you might say, "you know, those ACT-UP types who go around marching in the streets." Duh. If *those* are the people you mean then it just goes to show, once again, that you people don't know what the heck you are talking about. Do you *know* what a "militant" is?! A militant is someone with a military-like organization. What characterizes a military-like organization? Well if the organizational set up is one that's militaristic, with foot soldiers who obey orders and leaders who give orders, than that's a militant organization. Oh yeah, and there's one other crucial element. A militant group is armed, with *weapons*! You may claim to carry them only to defend yourself, (as most militant organizations claim) or you may claim to carry them to threaten and intimidate your enemy, (which no one really claims, but that's probably the real reason).

The Michigan Militia is a militant organization. The Black Panthers, back in the days when they were carrying guns at their sides, *they* were militant. The SLA were militants. A gang of White Power skinheads, with knives and chains, are militants. I have never seen a militant gay organization. Queer Nation were not militants. GLADD aren't militants. ACT-UP are not militants. In fact, I was a member of the New York chapter of ACT-UP in its heyday. No gun was ever issued to me, and it was far from being an organized, military-like organization. I took no commands from higher-ups. There were no leaders in the group. Meetings were chaotic. Demonstrations, even the ones with careful planning, were disorganized, at least when compared to a *military* action, anyway. It was all quite anarchistic, actually.

In a way, I sort of wish there *were* militant homosexual activists. Maybe with that threat looming out there, the homophobes would be more willing to respond to the demands of less extreme gay activists. But, I don't know. It doesn't seem to work for the Michigan Militia, so why should it work for anyone else? What's incredibly sad and shocking is that, unlike the unreasonable demands of most "militant organizations," all that gay activists ever ask for is equality. They ask for things like the legalization of gay marriage. The response they get is the ridiculous assertion that gays are trying to win "special rights." Hello? If you have the legal right to marry the person that you love but it's against the law for me to do the same, how is that a "special right?" What you're denying me is the *equal* right to be married. Another thing that the gay rights activists ask for is to be able to serve in the armed forces. Again, if you have the right to join the navy but that same choice is denied to me, then how am I asking for a "special" right? It's the *equal* right that I am entitled to, but is closed off from me. If your landlord finds out you're Jewish and he doesn't want Jews in his building and he tries to evict you, you can fight back with the knowledge that he has no right to do that. But if my landlord finds out I'm gay and doesn't want gays in the building, it's OK in a lot of states for them to haul me out into the street, and I'll have no legal foot to stand on. Am I looking for "special" protection against such a thing happening to me, or is it the *equal* protection under the law that is excluding me?

How can this country claim to believe in the principles of equality for all when at every turn gay people are denied

equal participation in society? In fact, it is the denial of equality for gays, by this homophobic society, that *produces* the need for gay activism in the first place. It's the very idea of treating gay people equally that this entire society rejects. They *don't* believe in "liberty and justice for all." If you think this kind of talk is all just more "PC" for the pages of this so-called "PC" magazine, well then that's just too bad. You're dead wrong. "PC" is when you go out of your way to try not to offend a particular group. From where I stand, the very notion of gay equality seems to be totally offensive to just about everyone *except* the gays who seek it, and perhaps a few, (very few) heterosexual progressives. Yet people wonder why gay activists have to be so "flamboyant," so "in your face," so "militant." (Ha ha ha, yeah right, in your dreams.) As every good punk rocker knows, when you're pissed off, you get snotty and rude. Gay people have a lot to be pissed off about.

All that gay people have ever asked for is the same rights that everyone else already has, and yet they're told they're being selfish and want special rights and privileges. When faced with such bullshit, you better believe you get angry. Imagine if you went to get a marriage license and the judge told you that you weren't allowed to get one. You'd get angry too. What's the big deal anyway? How does two gay people getting married have an effect on any heterosexuals? But hets are hell-bent on preventing this from happening, and this results in demonstrations from frustrated and angry gay protestors in the streets. It may not do any good but it lets off steam.

You want to be let in on a little secret? Sometimes gay-rights demonstrations are not put together to try to convince heterosexuals of anything. A lot of times these demonstrations are staged purely to vent the frustration of gay people. The rationale used is that "everyone hates us gays and you're not gonna change their minds anyway, so you might as well go ahead and have the guts to be hated." Not everything revolves around trying to get heterosexuals to like us, you know. As long as they stubbornly continue to cling for dear life to their religions, their prejudices, and their phobias, they're *never* going to like us. So you protest and shout and act like a smart ass, cause you gotta do something with all that anger.

It's similar to punk rock, in a Way. Punk is often deliberately nasty, rude and abrasive. Punk doesn't really seek to be liked by everyone, but when the people who feel the same anger hear it, it's exhilarating to them! Punk is such a great, healthy way to release aggression and frustration, and it makes you feel great. It's exactly that same kind of feeling that you see at gay rights protests, especially the ones when people get really angry. When one of these angry protests make the news, other gays out there see it, and if they're feeling that same anger they get all excited and happy to see the protest. It fills them with pride to know there are angry gays out there flexing some muscle, and when the next protest is about to take place they want to go out and be a part of it.

These angry demonstrations aren't the only kind of protests though. There are sad, somber ones, like the candle-light vigils for the murder of Matthew Shepard. There are educational ones, where the point is to get the ear of some specific government officials to make them aware of a particular issue. There are "happy" ones like the kind staged by groups like The Radical Fairies to celebrate the release of inhibitions. And then there are the just plain ornery ones designed to express our rage. And yet, as angry as these demonstrations are, they've *never* gotten militant. I've yet to see a battalion of armed homos with Rainbow Flag armbands marching down the street. Think about that the next time you hear this phrase "militant homosexual." I mean, if anyone ever did have a reason to get militant, you'd imagine it would be gays. Think about it. After all the continued violent attacks by gay bashers, the denial of our equal rights, the hundred of thousands dead from AIDS, and a government that barely paid it any notice. If you were being singled out for this kind of treatment, wouldn't you feel threatened enough to go grabbin' for a gun?

Wow. Imagine if militant homosexuals really did exist. What if they actually successfully waged an armed takeover of the whole country? There have been examples of governments where the smaller minority actually had total ruling dominance over the majority, you know. (Remember the old South Africa?) Anyway, if gays ever did seize power, would they outlaw heterosexual marriage? Would they group together at night with baseball bats and go out hetero bashing? Would they exclude straight people from teaching positions? Enforce housing and job discrimination? Exclude them from military service and the Boy Scouts? Tell them they are too immoral to march in a St. Patrick's Day Parade? Would the churches of the nation condemn heterosexuals as being abominations against God? Would young heterosexual boys get beaten up regularly and called "straight boy" in the school hallways? Would young heterosexual women be raped by lesbians with the excuse that they were just trying to help them turn gay?

Gee Whiz! You heterosexuals had better hope that if us gays ever did take over everything that we would treat you a lot better than you've treated us.

Contact me at, PO Box 1502, Old Chelsea Station, New York, NY, 10011.

The year 2002 is here. Welcome to the *future*. I spent New Years Eve grumbling about the new line of Accapella-bots that will be coming out this year to replace perfectly good singers like myself. Then I got ridiculously drunk. Time to run though the *best* and *worst* things about the year 2001.

BEST BAND OF 2001: I thought this was a terrible year for music. Let's just say that *any* band that has Osama Bin Laden in it is *not* one of the best bands of 2001.

WORST BAND OF 2001: Weezer. Man this band sure learned how to suck. They put out a terrible album and reminded me why nerds need to be beaten up.

BEST THING TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME IN 2001: Remembering Sept. 11. We will never forget.

WORST THING TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME IN 2001: Forgetting Sept. 11. I don't know about you, but I hardly did any of *this* in 2001.

BEST DRESSED: Tim Duffy.

WORST DRESSED: Osama Bin Laden! What is up with guy! He's more like Osama Bin *shit* if you ask me!

BEST HAIR: Meg Ryan. Where *do* you get your hair done Meg? It's *always perfect!* If you happen to be reading MRR right now *please give me the recipe!* Now don't get me started on that adorable little nose of yours, you adorable bitch!

BEST MOVIE: *You've Got Mail* (this is the third year this has won best movie!)

WORST MOVIE: *Pearl Harbor*. Here comes Hollywood again with a ridiculous movie concept. Japan bombing Hawaii? *What-ever!*

DICK WASHER OF THE YEAR: John Becker. Once again my roommate wins this one for being in the kitchen with rubber gloves on giving his dick the washing of a lifetime.

MAN OF THE YEAR: Davy Crockett!

STINKER OF THE YEAR: Osama Bin Laden! What a stinker! Who put the nickel in *this guy*? He sure ruined

things for *everyone*! Faaaaaart! Calvin peeing on Osama sticker!

WOMAN OF THE YEAR: Osama Bin Laden! Get it? I called Osama a *woman*! What an insult! Uh oh…hey ladies don't get mad at me for this one, just save the *drama* for *Osama*! Rrrrrip!

MOST EMBARRASSING MOMENT: My pants fell down then I got raped by a giraffe then 200 bums marched in and shat on me. This all happened to me when I was onstage for the televised spelling bee world championship.

MOST SHOCKING MOMENT OF 2001: John Lennon's comment about the Beatles and Jesus! I don't know about you but I sure had fun burning their records when that little chimney sweep said that. In light of recent events we need things like religious icons to help bring up together. Hey Lennon you'd better get that foot out of your mouth or one day you're gonna get shot!

SONG OF THE YEAR: "Graduation Song" by Vitamin C. I like remembering things and this song reminds me of good times. When I listen to it I hardly remember any bad things. Bad things like Sept 11.

WORST SONG OF THE YEAR: Any unpatriotic songs.

BREAK UP OF THE YEAR: Tom and Nicole!

FOOD OF THE YEAR: $1.50 giant 7-11 hot dogs. Take one of those cover it with cheese and as many jalapenos as you can then a little mayo and by the time you get to work you won't be hung over anymore.

WORST PERSON TO BE IN 2001: Anyone born out of Fred Savage's ass.

BEST MEXICAN FOOD: La Morenita in Ceres, CA.

BEST DRUNKEN MOMENT OF THE YEAR: David Touhy and I getting kicked out of the Dresden for our repeated attempts to get the old lady and guy singing duo to sing *Xanadu* or *Wild Thing*. Then when we walked outside we came across a sitcom being filmed starring that lady with the big teeth from *Seinfeld*. I feel kind of bad now for the sorry ass PA who's job it was to get us to go away. The more they tried to get us to move from in front of the camera the more we'd argue as seriously as we could "But then we won't be on camera!" then ask everyone from the lighting guys to anyone standing around what our motivation was. The *Seinfeld* lady just stared at us with her mouth open. Then David went over and peed on a building and a cop driving by yelled "Act like a human being!" so we went to 7-11 and bought a bunch of corn dogs.

BEST NEW TV SHOW: *Undeclared*. I'm serious. This show is fucking great. The British guy from it was on the BBC version of *Queer as Folk*. The rest of the cast was from Freaks and Geeks.

ASS KISSER OF THE YEAR AWARD: Everyone who sucked the Strokes' dicks.

SCARIEST PERSON OF THE YEAR: Toni from *Love Cruise*. I hid behind the couch every time in the previews she yelled "Do you want a piece of me!?"

Well that about sums up the year 2001. Send me something. 2743 Waverly Dr Apt 9, Los Angeles, CA 90039. jringhoff@msn.com

Alright you fuckers. This month we're going to be talking about some of the places you can use to get your vinyl pressed up. I was going to lay down a spiel about feelings and such, but seriously, fuck that.

Over the years, I've used a bunch of different record pressing plants to get my vinyl manufactured. Every place you check out is going to have its strong points, its weak points, and its specialties. The trick is to find an honest plant that fits the requirements of your particular project.

The plant that I use most often is United Record Pressing in Nashville, TN. They press both 7"s and 12"s, and I think they are going to be adding 10"s later this year. Nine times out of ten they are the least expensive plant around, but to keep them honest, I usually call around for quotes anyway. Probably the best part of using United is the customer service. My customer service representative over there is Beth. She's totally fun to talk to, but at the same time she gets shit done and is totally dedicated to meeting deadlines. One time I found a place that'd do a job I needed for $50 cheaper. I still wound up using United, so it'd be Beth on the other end when I called up the plant.

I have nothing bad to say about United, but some people bag on the quality. United's 7"s tend to be a bit thinner than at other places, and when held up to light, the black vinyl is a bit translucent.

You can get in touch with these fine folks by writing to: United Record Pressing, 453 Chestnut Street, Nashville, TN 37203. Or you can call 'em up at 615-259-9396. If you are smart you will email them at: united@urpressing.com.

The next plant I want to talk about is Erika Records. Erika is located over in California and specializes in odd sizes, shaped vinyl, and crazy colors. If you are looking to do some custom stuff, these guys should probably be your only call.

The only downside to using Erika that I experienced was difficulty getting a person on the phone that was knowledgeable about my job. But what the fuck? I got some great looking 10"s.

Write 'em at: 12031 Regentview Avenue, Downey, CA 90241. Call 'em at (562) 904-2701. Website: www.erikarecords.com.

OK. Musicol is the name of a plant over in Ohio. It's a small place run by a guy named Warren. They operate with hand presses over there, which gives them real flexibility to offer low runs and small number of combinations of color. If you are looking to press in the 100 to 500 range, Musicol would be a great place to get a price. Also, if you're a dick and want only ten pieces of a run on a certain color, this is probably the only place that is going to be able to do that.

Call up Musicol at 1-800-240-5963.

The last plant that I want to talk about this time around is EuropaDisk, in New York City. Now, I've had a few nightmare stories pressing records here, and I've heard tons of horror stories from other people. But EuropaDisk has one thing going for it that other plants don't. That's Direct Metal Mastering. DMM is the process of cutting the grooves directly into a copper master. This allows EuropaDisk to skip over two of the three plating steps required for lacquers. The result is less noise, brighter sound, and up to around 15% more playing time.

I have a job in production now at EuropaDisk. It's an ON THE MIGHT OF PRINCES LP. The running time was so long, that it was either to it DMM or do it as a double LP. It was cheaper to go DMM, so that's what we did.

Anyway, the information for EuropaDisk is as follows: Europadisk, LLC 24-02 Queens Plaza South Second Floor, Long Island City, NY 11101. Phone 1-800-455-8555.

If you want information on *how* a record gets made, you should definitely check out the United Record Pressing website. They have pictures and articles detailing every step of the way. Check it out at www.urpressing.com.

Motherfucker. I have a few really cool label profiles coming up in the next few months. One of them is with

Xavier from the Maloka Anarcho Collective in France. He's a really great dude, and the label (and his band, ROBOTNICKA) really kicks ass. But alas, he didn't send the answers back to me quickly enough. Look out for that profile next month. So, this time around I'm going to do some short listings of a few of the great labels I've been trading with lately.

OK, so I can't remember who emailed who first, but this guy Troy Malish from British Columbia in Canada is fucking mint. He sent me over information on what I guess is his first and only release. He's had glowing reviews listed from *Heartattack, Slug and Lettuce,* and *MaximumRockNRoll.* I was impressed enough to press him for trading me ten CDs and six LPs. He agreed and the MANNER FARM LP/CD showed up a few weeks later.

Before I even got the package home, I was impressed. It was immaculate. It had crisp, clean, glued stamps, a great tape job on a strong box, impeccable penmanship, and a great phony invoice attached. As I cut the box open, I realized I was dealing with a professional. He had the ten CDs recessed in a separate cardboard cut-out, so they wouldn't bang around. These CDs and LPs showed up here exactly how they left Canada.

I don't blame him for being so careful too, cuz these things are really beautifully packaged up. Both the CD and LP have the same kind of neat recycled cardboard jacket with a great glued-on photo, and art. They also come with two large booklets filled with writing, lyrics, art, etc. It's neat shit.

So get in touch with this dude to order some records or set up some trades, okay? His address is: Troy Malish, Box 1168, Elkford, BC, V0B 1H0, Canada. You can email him at tmalish@hotmail.com.

Last month I also traded with a guy from Poplar Bluff, MO named Jason Long. If my memory is right, I think this dude used to mailorder from me a while back. Anyway, he does a label called Eminent Domain. I traded him some CONTRA CDs for a couple of 7"s he put out. The first was a REASON OF INSANITY / SICK ABUSE split 7". It's a great fast crusty hardcore record and all my copies came on red vinyl. I also go the BURY THE LIVING EP. This thing rages and the picture of the singer looks like the guy with the beard in MONSTER X. All my copies of this record came on blue vinyl. I'm really psyched to have traded with this guy. If you want more information, contact him at: Eminent Domain Records, PO Box 884, Poplar Bluff, MO, 63901.

OK, one more and that's it, I promise. Schizophrenic Records from Canada. Craig, who does the label, has been around the scene for a long time and judging by his liner notes, really cares deeply about the punk rock. I traded for some seriously great compilations with this guy.

First he had some limited to 500 reissue CDs from the old BCT label. *Last White Christmas Vol. 1* features BRONTOSAURI, RAW POWER, JUGGERNAUT, STATO DI POLIZIA, PUTRID FEVER, DEMENTS, USELESS BOYS, WAR DOGS, and A'USCHLAG. Volume 2 of the same series has got CHEETAH CROME MOTHERFUCKERS, I REFUSE IT, and TRAUMATIC. But my favorite out of the reissues has to be the *I Thrash Therefore I Am* compilation. For poseurs like me who are seeing this for the first time it's got MOB 47, ANTI-CIMEX, RAW POWER, ENOLA GAY, TERVEET KADET and tons more.

Back in our century, Craig's got two more CD compilations out with the likes of DEMON SYSTEM 13, DAHMER, THE SWARM, 9 SHOCKS TERROR, MORMONS, and tons more. Plus releases from LEGION, MEXICAN POWER AUTHORITY, and SICK ABUSE.

Get in touch with Craig and Schizophrenic Records at 50 Fielding Cres., Hamilton, ON, L8V-2P5, Canada. Or email him at craig@netinc.ca

That's all for this time around. Maybe next month I'll get into how I'm holding up with anxiety and depression, but seriously, it's not going that well. Wish me luck.

Please send your letterbomb valentines to: Wells Tipley, PO Box 772, East Setauket, NY, 11733 USA. Or email me at wells@trafficviolation.com.

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END NOTES:

1. Rory Killburn from San Diego was probably born in the same hospital as me. He wrote me a letter. Either I lost the address, or it didn't come with one. Are you out there? Can anyone put me in touch with him? Thanks.
2. I'm going to be archiving all my old columns on the web. By the time you read this the page should be up at www.trafficviolation.com.
3. My Influenza is not Anthrax. I knew it all along.
4. I've been kinda shitty about answering mail promptly the last month or so. Sorry to people who have written. I always write back, it's just that sometimes it takes a while.

Wrecking Ball

THE BELTONES have done it again! The new full length LP by these Florida punks on TKO Records is called *Cheap Trinkets* and it is really great! William McFadden and THE BELTONES deliver twelve original songs that have great rock hooks, smart lyrics and the gruff STIFF LITTLE FINGERS style vocals that we all love.

The first song on this beauty is "Ain't No Life," about a run-in with the cops that results in some jail time. It goes like this: "Slap the cuffs on buddy/ I can see you think it's funny/ And could you take your foot off my neck for a second/ So I can peel my face off the ground." This is good rock n' roll with a message: stay out of jail. "Set 'Em Stevie" speaks of trying to drown the sorrow of a lost love. Very good! "Weak" is introspective, self-effacing, and starkly realistic. The bitterness of lyrics like: "I pray to God and take or leave my soul to keep/ 'Cause I ain't got no soul, just broken dreams and bloodstained sheets/ Ain't no girl that'll even mean shit to me/And without her kiss I fear I'll never get a good night's sleep." This is a fine tune!

"Cheap Trinkets," the title cut, is another song about love gone bad. Mr. McFadden can really pen a love song! He must have had substantial experience in matters of the heart. "Hellfire" is a fast rocker about the frantic pace of a protagonist's pursuit of fast women who try to tie him down "running around with his ass on fire." "Shitty in Pink," first appeared on the Radio Records' seven inch last year and it has stood the test of time well! There's a lot of anger towards the bar room tramps that this alpha-wolf encounters: "Acting like you want a puppy dog—some chump to yank around on a chain/ Well, I cut all ties that bound and now it's Daddy's turn to play/ So truck your cute little ass a couple of stools over/ Got some drinking to get done." Now that's cold!

This record is quite the rock n' roll extravaganza! Side one is so good I can even over look the crappy Bob Marley cover, "Concrete Jungle." If I never hear another Bob Marley song again it will be too soon.

Side two rips you a new asshole with the great tune "Better Than A Kick In The Head," about—you guessed it—relationships with women. It is possible that Mr.

McFadden is a superb lyricist, like Mr. Robert Zimmerman, and is able to write a love song without experiencing all the pain (and joy) of being in the thick of it with this many girls. Indeed, the next five songs all dwell on matters of the heart.

"Lullabye" has Bill doing his best STIFF LITTLE FINGERS growl. This song demonstrates how THE BELTONES have dethroned the SWINGIN' UTTERS as top purveyors of this brand of melodic street rock. The next song is "Mix It Up," which is a fast, positive, uplifting rock number celebrating being together with the girl. The guitar work on "Mix It Up" is really good! Next on the agenda, is "Mr. Wrecking Ball," which is a very strong slice of punk rock music on a very strong record. Read the lyrics to "Mr. Wrecking Ball": "A candle flickers in my room, and I'm reading the words that she wrote so long ago/ I know they're gonna be here soon, come morning I'll be joining the girl that I love so/ Mr. Wrecking Ball set me free, if I can't have my love I don't want to be/ And every drink's another memory, take my life and give my baby back to me/ I close my eyes and it's her I see, with the face of an angel and a mouth like a sailor/ The good lord stole her away from me, I swear I'll settle the score with that rotten motherfucker/ Mr. Wrecking Ball set me free, if I can't have my love I don't want to be/ And every drink's another memory, take my life and give my baby back to me/ What will it matter now if I die, she's dead and gone, there's no one left to cry/ The cars will keep on rolling by long after I'm gone/ I think of the shit we pulled in this room, Mr Wrecking Ball come and seal my tomb/ I've run fresh out of reasons to go on/ A candle burns out in my room, soon I'll be tasting the lips that I kissed so long ago/ I know they're gonna by here soon, come morning I'll be joining the girl that I love so/ Mr. Wrecking Ball set me free, if I can't have my love I don't want to be/ And every drink's another memory, take my life and give my baby back to me."

Song number five on side two is a wild almost 50s-sounding rockabilly tune, called "The Thief," with yet another romantic twist for Bill as he "Steals A Kiss From The Prettiest Girl In Town." Cool! THE BELTONES end the album on a powerful note with "Garbage Picker"—the guitar introduction rings loud and true, like a SOCIAL DISTORTION song, and the poignant lyrics read: "I really thought I'd be something by now." This McFadden character is one of the best rock n' roll song writers the Sunshine State has ever produced! This is authentic American punk rock with the emphasis on rock. The building blocks of this great sound reach back to the 50s and the result is a very strong medication for anyone who's ever loved someone with all their heart. This record gets a high recommendation from me!

THE STAGE BOTTLES, the popular anti-fascist, anti-racist, street'n'Oi! band from Germany has two new CDs for you skins and punks! The CDs are co-produced by Mad Butcher Records in Germany, Insurgence Records in Canada and Kontro Ogni Barriera Records in Italy.

The first STAGE BOTTLES CD is new material and the CD is called *I'll Never Live My Life*. This CD starts off enthusiastically with the title song, "I'll Never Live My Life" and this is really good! The STAGE BOTTLES play excellent guitar driven melodic street punk and Oi! music complete with punchy vocals and some saxophone accompaniment. This first song starts with: "My father wants me to be conforming to this society/ Wants me to be the same as him/ Live a boring life and die." This song is followed by "You Never Know," about the uncertainty of life. Song number three is "Come Together," about unity amongst the skinheads, hooligans, and punks. Number four is a strong indictment of fascists and white power groups, "You've Never Been Right."

Song number five fucking rocks! "I've Never Been So Glad" has some intelligent lyrics about the irony of losing someone or something, and then in a larger perspective some good came out of it! read how these intellectual skinheads approach a learning situation: "You/ Me/ Were a couple/ We swore love forever/ We'll stand every problem/ No one can separate us/ Our relationship is unique/ We've got true emotions/ Truth is n our heart/ We could never stand it/ To stay apart/ You/ Me/ Were a couple/ You could have been my love forever/ But the times are changing/ Where are the lovely years/ We've had together/ Complications/ No sweet harmony/ What's left is sweet remembrance/ No repetition/ But I'm free/ [Chorus:] I've never been so/ I've never been so sad/ I've never been so/ I've never been so glad/ Had a job/ I was making money for a big boss/ A little percentage/ Earned by me and my friends/ We started to talk/ about the workers' power/ Fought for our rights/ And then I lost my job/ [Chorus]/ It takes time to understand/ Though you lost something You wanted to hold tight/ At the end it was the best/ That the lie was ending/ Be honest to yourself/ Or illusions will collapse/ [Chorus]."

The STAGE BOTTLES plow through another strong number, "A Mad Man's World," that questions the institutions that imprison men and women as insane ["mad"]. Next up is another good song, "Hope You Gonna Save Your Life," with more of the well-thought out lyrics that position the STAGE BOTTLES as one of the more philosophical bands in the street punk/skinhead movement—read on: "A big city/ Bigger than your own/ You feel like an alien/ Discover a planet you have never seen/ Enemies are used to this/ To this environment/ So they must be/ They must be superior/ [Chorus:] Hope you gonna save your life/ For what reason ever/ A revolution/ Or a football match these times/ Fascists want to march again/ You're not alone/ You're not on your own/ Your friends tell you to stay true/ You've got a reason so to do/ [Chorus]/ Now you lost them all/ Now you're on your own/The situation changed another rim/ Probably a question of survival/ You don't feel cool now/ You feel how you are/ A little thing in a big universe/ A test to see how strong you really are/ [Chorus]."

The next tune is the saxophone laden tune "Arsehole," about a friend who betrayed the singer and whose word cannot be trusted anymore. "Working In A Suit" is about compromises we must make in this life to live the kind of lifestyle we desire. "Too Young To Die" is about a friend who killed himself over love lost. "Weird Life In A Strange World" is pretty much self explanatory—life does take some unusual twists and turns. This is a good CD—there's lots of proficient guitar work with strong lead singing and back-up vocals. You get eleven catchy tunes with thought provoking lyrics. Excellent!

The second CD on Mad Butcher/Insurgence/KOB is a STAGE BOTTLES retrospective "1993-2001." This CD traces the band's history from their inception in 1993 when Olaf brought his singing and saxophone playing abilities from BLAGGER ITA out of North London. In this mid-90s incarnation, the STAGE BOTTLES had a female vocalist, Manu, as well. The STAGE BOTTLES released their debut 7", *They're Watching Me* in 1994, followed by the *Corruption and Murder* LP in 1995 and the *Take That* 7" in 1996. 1998 saw the release of the second LP *Big Kick*. Manu left the band, and in 1999, the STAGE BOTTLES released the ska-flavored *Sometimes Anti-Social, Always Anti-Fascist*. The year 2000 saw the release of the live LP, *Keep On Fighting* and the release of a split MCD with the Italian skinhead band LOS FASTIDIOS. In 2001, the STAGE BOTTLES released a split 7" with the band SCRAPY called *The Riot* EP. The new *1993-2001* CD gives you a good perspective on the development of this band from the earlier ska influences to the increased

street punk and Oi! tendencies of the current *I'll Live My Life*. This CD is of historical interest to all STAGE BOTTLES fans. The old songs have stood up remarkably well and the new material is quite good!

For your STAGE BOTTLES' records write to Mad Butcher Records, Bergfeldstr. 3, D—34289 Zierenberg, Germany; madbutcher@pader-online.de; www.madbutcher.de or Insurgence Records, 2 Bloor St. W. Suite 100-184, Toronto, Ontario, M4W 3E2 Canada; www.insurgence.net or KOB Records, Via N. Mazza 65/B, 37129 Verona Italy; kob@bbk.org.

Oi! Strike Records from Rome, Italy presents a new Oi! CD for you skinheads and punks. The band is RAPTUS and the new CD is called *Bianco Rosso*. This CD has twelve songs of mid-tempo Oi!/street punk with ten in Italian and the last two in English. The singing is gruff and strong with choruses and harmonies. The guitars and drums are mixed up high and ring true and clear. On the first English language number, RAPTUS sings about "Living With Unemployment." This rocking song illustrates the perils of being in a large city away from home with no work and no housing.

The band instructs kids to blame those people in power for the sorry state of the workers' condition—don't blame the minorities! Do you want a solution? Join the army and go get shot somewhere. Song number twelve, "TV Sucker" urges you not to believe all the bullshit the media feeds you! This is a good street punk for you guys! Contact Oi! Strike Records, c/o Paolo Petralia, Via oderisi de Gubbio 67/69, 00146 Roma Italy; soarecords@libero.it; www.soarecords.it.

Bronco Bullfrog Records from Spain has released a 7" EP by the Barcelona, Spain band FRONTPILSEN '88-'91. The *Aquest Es El Nostre Moment* EP is a four song demo made in 1990. This is melodic sing-a-long punk influenced by THE BUSINESS, EDDIE AND THE HOT RODS, STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, CHELSEA, and THE RUTS. The singing is in the Catalonian language. The playing was pretty accomplished and according to the liner notes, the band had a bit of a following in Barcelona during the 1988-1991 era. For you FRONTPILSEN EP write to Bronco Bullfrog Records, Ap. Co. 1474 07800, Eivissa (Balears); info@broncobullfrog.com; www.broncobullfrog.com.

In 1978, Rene—vocals, Karim—guitar, and Marc—bass formed the band FOREFINGER in Marseilles, France. In 1982, Thierry replaced Karim on guitar and the band's name was changed to WARRIOR KIDS. Arguably the best Oi!/street punk band in France at the time. This line-up lasted until 1985 when Rene and Marc had to join the military. In 1991, with people showing some interest in a reunion, Marc and Rene got the WARRIOR KIDS back together and released the *Don't Tell Me Lies* single on SPE Records/ Reality Records in 1993. 2001 saw Disagree Records with Joker Records issue the *Warrior Kids Official Discography* with all the prior releases and one unreleased track from 1984.

The 1983 WARRIOR KIDS single *Adolescent/ Forces de L'ordre* remains one of the most sought after seven inches for French Oi! and punk collectors. This fucker still sounds as good as ever! The legendary WARRIOR KIDS LP from that era has survived the two decades well. Now you can have all these gems on CD or double vinyl along with pictures and lyrics by writing to: Disagree Records, BP 21, 13243 Marseille, cedex, France; disagree@free.fr.

VERY METAL from St. Louis, Missouri has another slab of bad ass hard punk rock for you cretins! The new CD on Beer City Records is called *Hit and Run* and this one thrashed the minute you begin the first track, "Living A Lie." Yeah! Then you smash right into "Hit and Run." Check out the lyrics to this cheerful tune: "Here I go again on the path that no one takes/ Broken dreams and broken bones is more take/ I've been knock down too many times before/ Goin' out tonight to settle the score/ Goin out for the hit and run/ Don't stop now because the damage is done/ No regards for my friends or my life/ Going out tonight to watch the bodies fly/ Bodies are flying and families are pointing at me/ Bodies in the road my headlight the last thing you see." VERY METAL combines the anger of the ANTI-HEROS with the power of POISON IDEA. The guitars plow through metal riff after metal riff. With the drummer and the bass player keeping the whole thing nailed down.

A really strong tune is "Night Stalker." This fucker pounds on you with relentless guitar attack and shouted vocals that capture the urgency of this punk band, read Pat Munster's lyrics: "Running away through the fields, I sense her close, I sense her near/ Trying to find another way to get away, still I made her stay/ I feel the change and it starts all over again/ I know it's night when the lust takes over again/ Night falls and I feel I found my home/ With countless victims you know where I've been and gone/ You're feeling fear all around but now it's over, you're knock to the ground/ Feel the pain as the teeth sink in, the night has found another victim." VERY METAL are a very tough punk band with fans across the entire United States. this Beer City Release will convert more people to their brand of brutal punk rock!

Beer City has seen fit to release a compilation of FACTION's recordings called *Collection 1982-1985*. This popular skate punk band from San Jose had a devout following back in the eighties and opened for many infamous Southern Californian bands early on. Shows with SUICIDAL TENDENCIES or SOCIAL DISTORTION were always wild and wolly. This CD give you twenty-eight songs from the halcyon days of the FACTION.

The folks at Dropkick Records in Australia have a bitchin' new compilation out for you drunks and punks. This fucker is entitled *The Onyas* and it features "twenty one bands that owe their existence to the ONYAS." The *Ego, Ego, Ego* LP is filled with raw rock n' roll inspired by the ONYAS' during their ten year descent into rock n' roll purgatory.

Some of the bands who contribute to this debacle are: STRUTTER, rocking out on their song "The Judge"; LOS ASS-DRAGGERS with their pure rock n' roll filth on "Professional Wanker"; ROYAL DOULTON with a fuzzed out fucked up tune screaming about "Rick Stanley"; SUGAR SHACK with a 60's flavored garage punk number called "Thee Crusaders"; BIG BONGIN BABY singing "Islam Panty Rock"; STUNT CAR DRIVERS playing "Violent Town"; Ohio's THE NEW BOMB TURKS revving it up with "Good On Ya Baby"; the brutal hardcore attack of the IRON SHEIKS from Adelaide, pounding you with "Tour Of Duty"; and wrapping up side one, MR. BASTARD with a rowdy version of Roger Miller's "King of the Road."

Side two of this hard rock extravaganza begins with MUSTANG playing a version of "Sydney Girl"; THE HYMIES with a smoking song, "Going To See The Onyas"; the grand-old-masters of Australian pub-rock feedback, the COSMIC PSYCHOS with their brilliant "Custom Credit, live and on fire; the WRONG 'UNS playing "No-Count Theme"; CRUSADERS bring back the rocking sixties with "Deep Shyte"; LOS PERROS ripping through a song by BORED! called "Motherfuckin' Motherfucker"; ASTEROID B-612 with a STOOGES rave up, "Fresh Rag"; and last, but not least, the ONYAS, themselves, and their theme song, "We Are The Onyas."

Until Next Month—
See you at the bar!

Mykel Board sez:

YOU'RE WRONG!

My knees press against my chest. One to a nipple. The pressure of the naked body above forces them harder against me.

"Just relax," he says. "I'm not that big."

I inhale and relax. The tip presses hard against my reluctant sphincter. A slight opening. Then more. Yaiii! He's inside. It's like shitting in reverse. I tighten against him, molding myself to the shape of his oriental scud. Once inside, he holds for a moment before he starts to thrust. The KY vacuum slurp slurps with each press forward.

Before the pain travels up my spine to my brain, I feel his friend at my head. Opening my eyes, I see a second hard meatstick, rising above me. I tilt my head back allowing my throat to open in a long smooth tube. The second piece of yellow flesh presses into my throat. I'm stuffed. From both ends. Like two holders in a corncob. Twin pressure, moving faster and faster. Their movements fall into a perfect rhythm, two men sawing a tree. One pushes. The other pulls. I reach down and grab my own thrusting branch.

My abraded sphincter pulsates to the throbbing vienna sausage inside. My own double marbles pull themselves tight trying to reenter their pre-adolescent home. The flesh in my throat blocks the air passage to my lungs. The lack of oxygen is making me high. Above, I can hear two voices moan into each other's mouths. I'm the first, spewing forward, hitting my own chest with the viscous liquid. I feel the tightening, the spurting, the force deep in my intestines. One. Two. Three. A nanosecond later, comes that familiar taste in the back of my throat. Yes! Yes! Yes!

Then, the collapse, the gasp.

"Isn't it great to be gay?" comes the voice at my head.

"Who are you calling gay?????" I ask, spitting out his semen.

****

Sometimes I think my brain doesn't work like other people's. Things obvious to others. That others say *of course* about. Or they say nothing at all because they don't need to ask. To me, they're not obvious at all.

Turn the key to the left. A simple enough instruction, right? Really? I don't get it. How can you turn something to the left? I just don't see it. Cars can turn right or left if they're moving. I can face right or face left. OK, but turn a key? If I turn the top part to the left, the bottom part turns right. Vice and versa. Every rotation has *two* movements. More actually, the sides go up and down. Turn it to the right? Where? What part?

Construction signs bother me. I see a sign in the road that says *Construction Two Miles.* What does that mean? Is it obvious? Do other people understand this? Does it mean construction *for* 2 miles or *in* two miles? If it's *for,* does it start now? If it's *in,* how long will it go on? This is not at all obvious to me.

Add also to my traffic misunderstanding, news reports saying, there is *a half hour delay to the George Washington Bridge.* A half hour? From where? Is it a half hour from the start of the bridge? From the start of traffic congestion? From where the helicopter is? What kind of useless information is *a half hour delay*? I don't get it.

Like these "obvious" things, I also don't get what GAY means. That word that I took such offense to may have a different meaning for others. Maybe I'm just not getting it. To check it out, I decide to ask my "gay" pal Mensch Maier. He's an attractive guy anyway. You never know where these questions can lead.

"So Mensch," I ask. "What does *gay* mean?"

"Is this a come-on?" he answers perceptively.

"Who me?" I say in my most innocently offended voice.

"Yeah right," he says. "But I'll tell you anyway. Gay and lesbian are now separate things. So I'll talk about gay only. OK?"

I move nearer to him, letting my thigh come ever-so-close to his.

"Fine," I answer.

"Gay means you have sex with men," he says.

"Does that mean my mother and my sister are gay?" I ask. "They have sex with men."

"Of course not," he says. "It's *men* who have sex with men."

"Does that mean a man of choice or a man of birth?" I ask. "If a female-to-male transsexual has sex with a man, is he gay?"

Mensch nods.

"You mean everyone who's sent to jail becomes gay?" I ask. "Is that a government-sponsored recruitment service?"

"Of course not," says Mensch. "That's forced sex. It has to be men who *are attracted* to men."

"Oh I see," I tell him, "that means David Bowie and Me?"

"No," he says, moving ever-so-slightly away from the touch of my thigh. "They like women too. To be gay, you have to be *only* attracted to men."

"But your best friend is Mary Fotze," I tell him. "How can someone be your best friend if you're not attracted to them? Most homos I know have best friends who are female."

"No," he says, "I mean you have to be *sexually* attracted. You can be emotionally attracted to anyone."

"Oh," I say. "That means that married guys, with families, who love their wives and screw little boys for tension release, they're gay?"

"Maybe," he says. "It depends on their feelings."

"Feelings?" I ask. "You said it was only sex. If you love women but screw guys, you're gay. Right?"

"No," says Mensch. "People can screw anybody. But you have to have a lust for them to be gay."

"Now wait a minute," I say. "You've got to be male, sexually attracted to males *and* emotionally attracted to males. But it can't be a friendly loving emotion, just a sexy emotion."

Mensch nods. "That's pretty close," he says.

"That's a pretty weird way to divide the world," I tell him.

"How can it be weird?" he says, "It's biological. I read it in a book. It's all genetics. In the hypothalamus or something. Homos have a big one... or is it a small one? I don't remember."

"Biological?" I ask. "How could it be biological? In some cultures, there is no concept of "gay" at all. In Thailand and most of South America, "gay" is just getting ass-fucked. It has nothing to do with attraction. In some American Indian tribes, there is no gay. There is a "third sex" that is men who are feminine. The American/British concept is based on the Jewish-Christian bible. That ain't biology. Gay is as biological as chopsticks or gefilte fish."

"OK," says Mensch. "What do *you* think gay is?"

I smile, finally getting the question I'm fishing for.

"I think gay is a fear reaction," I say.

"Don't give me that Freud stuff," says Mensch.

"Freud shmeud," I tell him. "I don't mean fear of your father or fear of women or any of that stuff. I mean fear of freedom."

I watch the *huh?* rise from his wrinkled forehead.

"See," I continue, "most people believe you have a

choice. You can either be *straight* or *gay*. That's what they think. If you pick one, that's it. You're stuck with it. That's what you *are*. More than that, some people believe you don't even get to choose. It's like Popeye, *I yam wad I yam!* I mean is Richard Simmons gay?"

"Does the Pope shit in the woods?" answers Mensch.

"Why is he gay?" I ask. "How do you know? Did you ever fuck him?"

Mensch makes a face like someone forced him to watch 40 reruns of The Seven Hundred Club.

"He's such a queen!" he whines, "You can't be that flaming unless you're a flaming *something*."

"So now gay is more than attraction?" I ask. "Now, it's a flick of the wrist? A vocal intonation? If a swishy guy only screws girls, is he gay?"

"Probably a closet case," he answers.

"So it's not screwing at all!" I say. "It's *nothing*. There is no gay. The whole identity is based on air. Actually on fear: fear of *no* identity."

"Then so is heterosexuality," answers Mensch. "If there are no homos, there are no hets."

"That's right," I tell him, "but for most hets don't care. They don't have anything invested in it. You know how many "het" boys I've slipped the sausage to?"

Mensch shakes his head.

I answer, "Let's just say if every one got anthrax, we'd have a plague... Know how many lesbos I've plugged?"

Mensch shakes his head again.

I answer, "Let's just say if every one got anthrax, we'd have the cure."

"What does that prove?" he asks. "You can't make it with lesbos?"

"Nope," I answer, "it means that lesbos and homos have more invested in their identities then hets. It means that because laws, social conventions, and Christians divide people into het and homo, people accept that and divide themselves. It means that because it's harder to "be" a homo than a het, people invest more emotion in that identity."

"Why would anyone *choose* to be a homo?" asks Mensch. "It's oppressive and can get you killed."

"Lotsa people don't choose it at all," I tell him. "Someone bullied them into it. Harry Highschooler finds that he's got the hots for Swisshyboy Simpson. Harry's friends tell him that if he likes boys he must be a homo. So, Harry figures, *I'm a homo.* That's how it starts."

"But some people *are* homos," says Mensch, "not everybody, but some people. They only like other guys."

"Like?" I say, "What kind of like?"

Mensch looks at the ceiling like we've been through this before. We have.

"See, we choose people based on different factors," I tell him. "In lust we might have different criteria than in friendship. Even the homo-est homo wouldn't lust after *every* guy. There are criteria. Sometimes those criteria match a gender.... For example, if Peter Pickle has a long shlong fetish, he'll find very few females who fill the bill."

"That's my point," says Mensch, "Peter is gay."

"Not at all," I say. "He's a long shlong fetishist. It just happens that his fetish matches one gender. But it is *not* the gender that's the attraction. He certainly wouldn't be turned on by...er...me. It is a mistaken view of the world to divide it into homo and hetero...or even homo, hetero, and bi. There is an infinite number of sexualities out there. There are no real division lines...or rather there are as many division lines are there are people....More...My fetishes today are not the same as they were yesterday."

Mensch isn't buy it. "Theory theory theory," he says. "All that doesn't matter. Everybody I wanna fuck is a guy... Whether or not I wanna fuck every guy. If I get fag-bashed, the basher isn't gonna consider whether or not I'm a long-shlong fetishist."

"And how many hets get bashed because some basher *thinks* they're homos?" I ask.

"That's not the point," says Mensch. "The point is that in the basher's mind, there are homos. That's who he wants to bash. I could call myself an OscarMeyerite, but if, in a basher's mind, I'm a homo. Then I get bashed."

"Ah," I smile... one of those superior know-it-all smiles that so irritate those few people who still call themselves my friends. "That's the whole point. Why should I care if someone calls himself *gay* or not? What difference does it make?"

I answer my own question, "It matters because homo=death. Homo=danger. Homo=bashed. If there are no fags, what are fag bashers going to bash?"

"You're an idiot," says Mensch. "It's not what we call ourselves; it's what *they* call *us*!"

"You don't have to accept it," I tell him. "You don't have to define yourself the way *they* define you. You don't have to be *queer*."

"What's *queer* got to do with it? Queer is just a radical way to say we're not sexually average. We're not your everyday missionary wife-fuckers. You're *queer*, Mykel, even if you're not gay."

"You're wrong!" I tell him creatively. "That's my whole point. Even those wife-fuckers do different stuff. Some of 'em swap. Are they queer? Some of them like to stick it in between the rolls of fat under the chin. Are they queer? Some of them like to keep their socks on. Are they queer?"

"Of course they're not queer," says Mensch. "They just have a little variation. That's all."

"We *all* have a little variation," I tell him. "That's the point. Queer is *different*. You can't be different if everyone is. Difference is normal. It's the beat of the day. As queer as Bruce Willis. Once you stop looking at yourself that way, others will get the same idea. Once others stop seeing themselves— or others—as queer, sexuality will stop being a dividing line. The idea will spread. Like Small Pox. Before long we'll all be just one big happy horny family."

Mensch shakes his head. "I donno," he says. "I gotta think about it."

I put my arm on his shoulder, resting my fingers lightly at the nape of his neck. "While you're thinking," I say, "I got a short rubbery itch that needs scratchin'. Think you can help?"

He looks at me, shakes his head, and the rest... well, what would *you* do?

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get a few extra endnotes]

—>*And what about TWAT? dept*

Catherine, our intrepid reporter and object of the first few paragraphs of the *last* column, has stuck her nose deep into poontang. Here's what she's come up with.

What exactly does poontang mean? It has several meanings: a woman as a sex object, sexual intercourse, and probably the ultimate meaning, female pudenda. So where did such a bizarre-sounding word come from? There are several theories. Probably the most popular is that it derives from Louisiana (and standard) French poutain "whore"... However, the connection to poutain is based mostly on conjecture, because of the similarity of the French word to the English one. Some etymologists specializing in slang think that the word more likely derives from a Chinese, as there are variant forms like **poon tai** *and* **poon kai**. *One school has it coming from some Filipino language, while Eric Partridge guesses it is of American Indian origin. Oh, I found it amusing to learn that the following statement is widely attributed to John F. Kennedy immediately after he was elected president in 1960: "I guess this means my poon days are over."*

—>*What the world needs now dept.* My pal Julien sent me a great article from the *NY Times* (can you imagine?) It was written by a gal named Laura Kipnis. It's too long to reprint here, but you can find it on line in *The Times* of Oct. 14, 2001. Here's a sample:

The prevailing cultural wisdom is that even if sexual desire tends to be a short-lived phenomenon, "mature love" will kick in to save the day when desire flags. The issue that remains unaddressed is whether cutting off other possibilities of romance and sexual attraction for the more muted pleasures of mature love isn't similar to voluntarily amputating a healthy limb: a lot of anesthesia is required and the phantom pain never entirely abates. But if it behooves a society to convince its citizenry that wanting change means personal failure or wanting to start over is shameful or simply wanting more satisfaction than what you have is an illicit thing, clearly grisly acts of self-mutilation will be required.

Pretty good, huh?

—> *Warning dept:* This email came from a thoughtful fan who wanted to warn me about the date rape dangers of an awful chemical. For safety's sake, I thought I'd pass it on to you:

Police warn all male clubbers, party-goers and unsuspecting public house regulars to be more alert and cautious when getting a drink offer from a girl.

** There is a drug called* **beer**, *that is essentially in liquid form.*

** The drug is now being used by female sexual predators at parties to convince their male victims to have sex with them.*

** The shocking statistic is that* **beer** *is available virtually anywhere!*

** All girls have to do is buy a* **beer** *or two for almost any guy and simply ask the guy home for no-strings attached sex.*

** Men are literally rendered helpless against such attacks. Please! Forward this to every male you know..*

—>*Newest stroke inducer dept:* I mentioned last week about how my punkrock listening habits cause my pulse to race way above the danger level while I'm exercising at the gym. The newest culprit is the early 90s Mexican band, *Rebel'd Punk.* You'll recognize a famous rock'n'roll tune, and a Spanish cover of *Suzy is a Headbanger.* But there's a whole lot more. This CD has everything I want, except that it's unhealthy in the gym.

I don't know anything about the band. I wrote to my hispanic pals Esneider and Martin. Those guys know about everyone who speaks Spanish. So far no answer, though. In the meantime, You can reach 'em at Discos y Cintas Denver, Sur 28 No. 55 Col. Agricola Oriental, CP 08500 Mexico DF, Mexico. Tell 'em they're killing me!

1,800,000 and counting

A column by Prisoners.

More Flamers! More Bull Dykes! The Crucial Need For Flamboyance

When I walk the prison yard not much sets me apart from the hundreds of guys out there with me besides my hair, which really isn't too extreme, just one line of spikey disarray in an ocean of bic bald, tanned, tattooed heads or slicked back mobster do's. I got a lot of tattoes on my body; but so does everyone else. I got a distinctive swagger; so does everyone else. I got a tough look in my eyes, not because I'm a hard ass, but because doing years in prison gets in your head and establishes this headquarters for personal defense, like a mental body guard, and it shows. Everyone else has that too. Besides the noticeable difference of obvious skin colors, various heights, physical frames, all convicts really look alike—prison does that; it's like involuntary solidarity on our part. We represent the blue prison issue duds, we represent the rebel, we represent the green suits' enemy. We relate. We're always paranoid, of the Man, of the rats, of enemies. It comes with the environment.

They even have protocols to undermine individuality, to keep us in inferior mindframes, to take away the ability to express yourself. There's this set of rules that constitute "grooming standards." No long hair, all cuts must be under three inches. No facial hair other than trimmed moustaches. They tell us this is enforced to be able to identify us better, like in case of an escape, I guess, but this just doesn't make sense. Making us look more like one another makes us lose recognizable difference; without these we would have long and short hair, shaved heads, goatees, full beards, fu manchus, handle bar mustaches, chops, dreadlocks, etc., and I wouldn't be getting fucked with every day and punished for having a harmless mohawk. This is just a power trip, more propaganda to prove we are dominated people without free right. Our clothes are all the same colors, dreary blue, grey, white, same for shoes. The population smears into one another, the convict mirrors the prison itself; uniform, dull, hard, automated. Ah, but the beauty of the exotic image revolutionary, the idealist romantic, the iconoclast drag queen! The girly prison punk, an extreme and crucial necessity. The anti-convict, who I adore, support, and see as a vital organism in prison society, to break molds and shock mediocrity.

The jailhouse queen fighting the trap of macho homophobia is the brother (sister?) to the queer punk fighting not just society's homophobic condition, but mainstream gays striving to be civilized components of society, the business suit corpo-lesbian and the Polo-sweater blond Super-Cuts homo supremacy in the "Gay Rights" movement. The ones who see the queer punk as a lot of parents see their punk or queer kid, who "just had to be different," the "assimilationist," i.e. "someone who is gay but wants to be a part of mainstream culture, thinks "equal rights" means women and homos in the army, the right for a shitty job for life, and that freedom of choice means Coke, Pepsi, or 7-Up." (Tom Jennings, *Homocore* #7), those gays who snobbishly thumb their nose at queers who don't buy name brands, get manicures, go to salons, or listen to Ricky Martin. Discrimination in the ranks of the discriminated.

Why want to fit into their plan? Fuck that, make your own and demand the right to be equal on your terms, don't integrate to elevate to acceptably conformist levels. We need to break and destroy social guidelines and parameters, not figure out ways to make our anti-socialism squeeze into the shapes society will reluctantly tolerate. Don't dumb down or clean up to gain right in society—make them all admit it's your right to be as dirty, wild, illogical, fanatical and compulsive as you want. Don't try to "look normal" to be accepted as gay, so you don't frighten the conservatives. What's the point of coming out if you still play a role? Goddamn, aren't you sick of pretending? Come on, no one-really likes Ellen DeGeneris—quit acting like you do! Just because she's gay makes her a queer staple icon? Fuck that. How safe and unoffensively conformist can you be?

That's why we need flamboyance. We need the drag queens, cross dressers, and transvestites. We need the pansyffnifers and the burn-the-bra bull-dykes, we need the shock to the safe little system of the pacified mainstream, that of the upper class homo as well, with the Ivy League degree and the Benz. We need to be wild and totally opposed to traditional gender roles, we need to refuse rules and take that out into the public, to the streets, to the sidewalks, and be our own icons, our own role models, and smash any chance for our subversion. We need men in

glitzy costume jewelery and hot pants and lacy bras tonguing at bus stops, we need dykes in Dickies and slingshots starting shit with dudes in a bar, we need a couple of fag punks jacking each other off in parks at night, two lesbian softies petting each other in a movie theater, and same sex couples showing genuine love and affection.

We need queers out there, being themselves, however outrageous it is, being happy, being OK, being real to their own desires, and acting on their impulses, so the mania becomes contagious. Fuck being domesticated—we need to open up to each other not only as punks and queers, but as individuals standing together to open up to the established order, like trenchcoat flashers, waving our cocks and cunts at the trendies and conservatives and laugh, because no matter what they think, we've become free and will not accept shame or discomfort. So be flaming queer if that's what makes you happy, wear garters and panties, be a dyke goldess, wear a strap-on and steel toes, it doesn't matter, it's not the image, it's the freedom to do it Your extreme flamboyance is important because "some pretend fag is going to see a real queer...& realize there's more than interior decoration and get saved!" (Larry-Bob, *Holy Titclamps* zine).

The most important thing is to just do what you want, no matter what it is, as long as you aren't hurting anyone, it's your right. But remember, truth is the reason we do this, why we strive—not image. We don't want to create a stereotype we impose on ourselves. And we don't want to play roles either. That's what we are digging out of. So don't be someone you're not—we want to love you for who you are, just as we want to be loved. Be yourself dammit! That's been punk rock and it's still punk rock. Queer is queer, no matter what it looks like. If I could, I'd be sashaying down a city street right now, between a guy and girl, arms around both and trading kisses between the two. Now that is flamboyant. Live it to the fullest. You go girl!!

te/ How can you be offended/Just 'cause I'm not straight?"
—Scum Brigade

Flame on! Wet kisses to XLIMP WRISTX, hot boy Richard Bump at *Fanorama* zine, Janice Flux & *Cutlass* (I'll write soon sweety), my DEAD GURL Bri & *The World Is Broken* zine, sexy Sean Lambert & his *Fuck You I'm Queer* comp. Write to me, become part of the DIY network. In Solidarity, Neil, *Wiener Society* zine, Neil Edgar #K61832,A4-114, PO Box 409000, Ione, CA 95640 USA.

One of my parents' greatest fears is that their son (that would be me) would turn out to be gay. Centuries of Christian thought and sexual repression is transformed into that slight tinge of panic in my mother's voice when I tell her that I'm not really dating anyone right now or when she hears that I've recently ended a relationship with a woman. I've been asked "You like girls, right?" more times than I can ever even remember, to which I always respond in the affirmative. To be honest about it, my own sexuality is something that I have struggled with for years. I'm a firm believer that no one is strictly heterosexual or homosexual—but rather we are all degrees of these things. It all boils down to what our own personal needs are and what fulfills us; sexually, mentally, and spiritually. I don't believe in any sort of universal definable morality (beyond that which we define for ourselves) when it comes to our own sexuality. All of us are way too fucking different to place ourselves in simple easy-to-define boxes like that. I mean really, Mykel Board likes to fuck men, but do you really think he has much in common—even sexually—with the head of the local Log Cabin Republicans?

Queer punx have always been my heroes. This issue is for all of you—especially those of you who have affected my life in some way. Those of you who challenged me when I've been a dolt and those of you who have made me better person because of it. This is for all the queer punx who came before and never got the recognition they deserved—or worse got abused for who they were—and also for all of you who stick it out in this scene. This for folks like The Re-Sisters, Harum Scarum, Limp Wrist, The Haggard, Gary Floyd (The Dicks), Biscuit (Big Boys), Team Dresch, Myles To Destruction, Mukilteo Faries, and all the countless others who make up this scene.

Endnotes:
1) I want to thank Anandi, Todd, McKee, T. Pointless, Heather, and Zanne for helping me to maintain my sanity. I don't think you all understand the importance of just hearing your voice on the other end of the phone has for me.
2) AMDI PETERSENS ARME tour!!! They're from Denmark and will kick your fucking ass—amazing raw fast hardcore! You better go see'em or else you are most assuredly a poseur.
3) MRR's copy of the first NEON CHRIST EP was found broken on the shelf, if you have a copy of it please get in touch so we can replace it, thanks!
4) Photozine will be out June 1st—I promise. You're going to love it. Trust me.
5) Send presents (records, money, pictures of you and your friends, whatever) to me via the MRR PO Box or email me via mikethorn@mindspring.com

Once I started reading the interviews and columns sent for the queer issue, however, my disappointment evaporated. There was no malaise in any of the voices. I was impressed by the level of genuine vulnerability expressed in much of the writing, and also the teasing, and self-deprecating, and sexy humor. Despite, or because of, the challenges, these are punks with a real investment in their own selves, and it shows. These are sometimes young teenagers, who know much about who they are and how to trust and support each other. In contrast, so many straight, white boys and men in punk and hardcore bands, seem, when asked, to have nothing to say and no flair for saying it, but are *still asked*, and asked, as if the zine kids asking, and the bands, and the kids at the shows, were all on salary. I'm reminded of what Susan said in the queer roundtable: "punks are supposed to be these self-actualized individuals, but usually turn out to be very self-repressed."

I was struck by several themes that came up over and over in this issue. One is the sense of being pulled, or pushed, between threatening, homophobic, straight culture, and homogenous, restrictive, mainstream gay culture. Hence the queer, hence the punk. But, of course, kids are met with homophobia within punk, and the lack of a strong, broad support system for queer punk endeavors.

Queerness (like color, or femaleness) has such a close relationship with fear, it seems to me. Moving through the straight world, *anyone* has the power to hurt you, physically and politically, no tot mention emotionally, in a very real way, with just a word or a glance. What a state of rawness! One response, of course, is becoming hard, another is collapse, another is avoiding notice by achieving mediocrity. The people who wrote and spoke in this issue (and their many, many counterparts) are instead candid and compassionate people who doggedly, continually refuse to disguise themselves.

Thanks, punks. *arwenc@mindspring.com*

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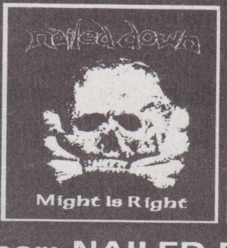

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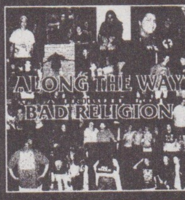

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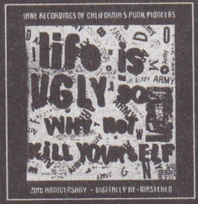

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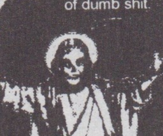

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The Day Ashcroft Censored Freedom of Information

By Ruth Rosen (SF Chronicle)
January 6, 2002

The President didn't ask the networks for television time. The attorney general didn't hold a press conference. The media didn't report any dramatic change in governmental policy. As a result, most Americans had no idea that one of their most precious freedoms disappeared on Oct. 12.

Yet it happened. In a memo that slipped beneath the political radar, U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft vigorously urged federal agencies to resist most Freedom of Information Act requests made by American citizens.

Passed in 1974 in the wake of the Watergate scandal, the Freedom of Information Act has been hailed as one of our greatest democratic reforms. It allows ordinary citizens to hold the government accountable by requesting and scrutinizing public documents and records. Without it, journalists, newspapers, historians and watchdog groups would never be able to keep the government honest. It was our post-Watergate reward, the act that allows us to know what our elected officials do, rather than what they say. It is our national sunshine law, legislation that forces agencies to disclose their public records and documents.

Yet without fanfare, the attorney general simply quashed the FOIA. The Department of Justice did not respond to numerous calls from The Chronicle to comment on the memo.

So, rather than asking federal officials to pay special attention when the public's right to know might collide with the government's need to safeguard our security, Ashcroft instead asked them to consider whether "institutional, commercial and personal privacy interests could be implicated by disclosure of the information." Even more disturbing, he wrote: "When you carefully consider FOIA requests and decide to withhold records, in whole or in part, you can be assured that the Department of Justice will defend your decisions unless they lack a sound legal basis or present an unwarranted risk of adverse impact on the ability of other agencies to protect other important records."

Somehow, this memo never surfaced. When coupled with President Bush's Nov. 1 executive order that allows him to seal all presidential records since 1980, the effect is positively chilling.

In the aftermath of Sept. 11, we have witnessed a flurry of federal orders designed to beef up the nation's security. Many anti-terrorist measures have carefully balanced the public's right to know with the government's responsibility to protect its citizens.

Who, for example, would argue against taking detailed plans of nuclear reactors, oil refineries or reservoirs off the Web? No one. Almost all Americans agree that the nation's security is our highest priority.

Yet half the country is also worried that the government might use the fear of terrorism as a pretext for protecting officials from public scrutiny.

Now we know that they have good reason to worry. For more than a quarter of a century, the Freedom of Information Act has ratified the public's right to know what the government, its agencies and its officials have done. It has substituted transparency for secrecy and we, as a democracy, have benefited from the truths that been extracted from public records.

Consider, for example, just a few of the recent revelations–obtained through FOIA requests–that newspapers and nonprofit watchdog groups have been able to publicize during the last few months:

•The Washington-based Environmental Working Group, a nonprofit organization, has been able to publish lists of recipients who have received billions of dollars in federal farm subsidies. Their Web site, www.ewg.org, has not only embarrassed the agricultural industry, but also allowed the public to realize that federal money–intended to support small family farmers–has mostly enhanced the profits of large agricultural corporations.

•*The Charlotte Observer* has been able to reveal how the Duke Power Co., an electric utility, cooked its books so that it avoided exceeding its profit limits. This creative accounting scheme prevented the utility from giving lower rates to 2 million customers in North Carolina and South Carolina.

•*USA Today* was able to uncover and publicize a widespread pattern of misconduct among the National Guard's upper echelon that has continued for more than a decade. Among the abuses documented in public records are the inflation of troop strength, the misuse of taxpayer money, incidents of sexual harassment and the theft of life-insurance payments intended for the widows and children of Guardsmen.

•The National Security Archive, a private Washington-based research group, has been able to obtain records that document an unpublicized event in our history. It turns out that in 1975, President Gerald Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger gave Indonesian strongman Suharto the green light to invade East Timor, an incursion that left 200,000 people dead.

•By examining tens of thousands of public records, the Associated Press has been able to substantiate the long-held African American allegation that white people–through threats of violence, even murder – cheated them out of their land. In many cases, government officials simply approved the transfer of property deeds. Valued at tens of million of dollars, some 24,000 acres of farm and timber lands, once the property of 406 black families, are now owned by whites or corporations.

These are but a sample of the revelations made possible by recent FOIA requests. None of them endanger the national security. It is important to remember that all classified documents are protected from FOIA requests and unavailable to the public.

Yet these secrets have exposed all kinds of official skullduggery, some of which even violated the law. True, such revelations may disgrace public officials or even result in criminal charges, but that is the consequence –or shall we say, the punishment–for violating the public trust.

No one disputes that we must safeguard our national security. All of us want to protect our nation from further acts of terrorism. But we must never allow the public's right to know, enshrined in the Freedom of Information Act, to be suppressed for the sake of official convenience.

US Blocks Drive for Increase in Aid

By Charlotte Denny (excerpt)
January 23, 2002, Guardian (UK)

The US government is blocking an international drive led by Britain to increase aid for the world's poorest countries in the wake of last year's terrorist attacks.

With less than two months to go before a crucial UN summit on global poverty in Monterey, Mexico, US officials are trying to neuter the draft declaration which calls for rich countries to raise the amount they spend on helping the 2.8bn people who live on less than $2 a day.

The conference has been called to discuss ways of helping poor countries reduce poverty, cut infant mortality, and provide universal primary education. But the US is seeking to delete any mention of the internationally agreed development goals and of the suggestion that rich countries should meet the UN target of spending 0.7% of national income on aid.

Washington is already one of the least generous donors -despite being the world's largest economy- devoting just 0.1%of national output to its international aid effort.

Britain and other, more generous donors, had hoped that the renewed US interest in multilateral action during the war on Afghanistan would help bring about a change of heart regarding aid within the Bush administration.

Some campaigners hoped that this signaled a willingness by western governments to consider radical new measures for raising revenue such as a Tobin tax on foreign exchange transactions or a global carbon tax.

But these have been vetoed by the US - even before the latest attempts to water down the draft communiqué.

Aid agencies attending preparations in New York this week for the Monterrey summit report that American officials have described the 0.7% target as an "outdated concept", and that they are pressing for it to be dropped from the final declaration.

The American attitude has provoked disquiet among fellow donor countries and outrage among the development charities.

"It seems the US will only tolerate multilateralism à la carte, and development, global redistribution and the interests of the poor are now off the menu," said Henry Northover, a policy adviser at Cafod, the Catholic aid agency.

Instead of discussing increased aid budgets, Washington wants the conference to focus on how poor countries can improve their own economic performance through further market liberalization.

Portuguese Nurse Imprisoned for Performing Abortions

Feminist Daily Newswire -January 18, 2002

Nurse Maria do Ceu Ribeiro was sentenced to eight years and six months in jail for providing abortions in Portugal where abortion is illegal except in cases of rape and in cases where pregnancy poses a serious risk to the woman. Seventeen women were also on trial for having abortions. While charges against one woman were dropped, sixteen were ordered to pay fines.

Pro-choice supporters in Portugal, a country heavily influenced by the Roman Catholic Church, have criticized the legal proceedings, claiming that the law does not meet the needs of women. "This trial [was] the result of applying a law that is perfectly out of sync with Portuguese reality," said Duarte Vilar, Executive Director of Portugal's Planned Parenthood Association. According to abortion rights advocates, up to 40,000 illegal abortions are performed in Portugal each year and many women travel outside of the country, at great expense, to seek services. Restrictions on abortion access, according to healthcare workers, make botched abortion the leading cause of maternal mortality in Portugal. In 1998, abortion-rights activists estimated that hospitals in Portugal saw roughly 10,000 women a year suffering from complications from illegal abortions.

Abortion rights advocates from 42 countries have come together to protest the Portuguese law against abortion. Ilda Figueiredo, a deputy to the European Parliament, has circulated a petition calling for the Portuguese abortion ban to be lifted. The petition already has hundreds of signatures.

Bush Denies Release of Funds for International Family Planning

Feminist Daily Newswire-January 14, 2002

President Bush placed a temporary hold on $34 million intended for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) as part of a foreign aid appropriations bill the President signed last Thursday. Anti-abortion forces led in Congress by Rep. Christopher Smith (R-NJ) have urged Bush to place a hold on the aid claiming UNFPA has condoned forced abortion and sterilization in China. UNFPA has denied that it funds any programs carrying out forced procedures. UN officials have criticized the Bush hold saying that it could deny thousands of women worldwide vital family planning services. Without U.S. funding, UNFPA estimates that its ability to prevent 800,000 abortions and the deaths of 4,700 mothers and 77,000 children under the age of five will be severely compromised.

Members of Congress have called on the President to release the funds to UNFPA. Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) called the hold "against the will of Congress, against the written support of [Secretary of State Colin] Powell, and against the crucial needs of millions of women and children around the world." Rep. Mark Kirk (R-IL) voiced similar concerns in a letter to the President. Kirk also implied that funding UNFPA and international family planning programs was in the best interest of the U.S. as it promoted long-term stability of other nations. Rep. Nina Lowey (D-NY) threatened to put the hold to a vote this year.

Congress Bolsters Ban on Training for Indonesia With One Bill, While Opening a Loophole with Another

Indonesia Human Rights Network / East Timor Action Network–December 21,2001

This week Congress strengthened conditions on resumption of military training in one bill, even as it opened a loophole to allow training under another. While the Indonesia Human Rights Network (IHRN) and the East Timor Action Network (ETAN) applauded one Congressional action, they vowed to strenuously oppose the inclusion of the Indonesia military under a new program.

The Foreign Operations Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2002 (HR 2506), passed by both houses of Congress this week, maintains the ban on International Military Education and Training (IMET) and Foreign Military Financing programs for Indonesia. Indonesia must meet newly strengthened conditions on human rights, access to conflict areas, and release of political detainees before this assistance can be resumed.

However, a last minute change in the Defense Department Appropriations Act (HR 3338) allows U.S. training of Indonesian military officers. Restrictions in the foreign operations bill will not apply to this training. Congress finished work on both bill on Thursday.

"Justice, peace and democracy will never flourish in Indonesia as long as its military remains unaccountable," said Kurt Biddle, Washington Coordinator of IHRN. "The foreign operations bill supports the Indonesian people who continue to be subject to intimidation, torture and murder by a military that is supposed to protect them from outside enemies. Unfortunately, the defense bill could undermine that support."

Congress first voted to restrict IMET for Indonesia, which brings foreign military officers to the U.S. for training, in response to the November 12, 1991 Santa Cruz massacre in East Timor. All military ties were severed in September 1999 as the Indonesian military and its militia proxies razed East Timor following its pro-independence vote. The original conditions codified into law in late 1999 include the safe return of East Timorese refugees, prosecution of those responsible for atrocities in East Timor and Indonesia, and security for East Timor from military and militia activity. None of these conditions have been met.

"The 2002 Act rightfully recognizes the impunity enjoyed by Indonesian security forces for crimes against humanity committed in East Timor in 1999 and the continued control of tens of thousands of East Timorese refugees by militia leaders living freely in Indonesian West Timor," said Karen Orenstein, Washington Coordinator of ETAN. "The Pentagon's latest move to gut the ban on Indonesian military training amounts to deliberate backsliding on human rights protections for the people of Indonesia and East Timor," she added.

The defense bill establishes a Regional Defense Counter-terrorism Fellowship Program. Senator Daniel Inouye (D-HI) added the program to the bill at the behest of Admiral Dennis C. Blair, Commander in Chief of the U.S. Pacific Command. What will be taught remains undefined.

The East Timor Action Network/U.S. (ETAN) advocates for democracy, sustainable development, justice and human rights, including women's rights, for the people of East Timor. ETAN calls for an international tribunal to prosecute crimes against humanity that took place in East Timor since 1975. See http://www.etan.org. The Indonesia Human Rights Network (IHRN) is a U.S.-based grassroots organization working to influence U.S. foreign policy and international economic interests to support democracy, demilitarization, and justice through accountability and rule of law in Indonesia. IHRN seeks to end armed forces repression in Indonesia by exposing it to international scrutiny. See www.IndonesiaNetwork.org.

Reporters Sans Frontières calls for an enquiry after three photographers are attacked near Tora Bora

Reporters Sans Frontières (http://www.rsf.org/)–December 21, 2001

In a letter sent to the American Secretary of Defence, Donald H. Rumsfeld, Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF, Reporters Without Borders) has expressed its concern about the attitude adopted by the American special forces who are said to have asked Afghani fighters to attack press photographers. RSF has asked the Secretary of Defence to provide detailed information on this incident and to take energetic steps to prevent the recurrence of such lapses. "Using Afghani fighters to mistreat and mug journalists is cowardly and contrary to international conventions protecting journalists in time of war," says Robert Ménard, RSF's secretary general.

According to information gathered by RSF, Joao Silva and Tyler Hicks, photographers for the US daily New York Times, and David Guttenfelder, photographer for the Associated Press news agency, were mistreated and threatened on December 20th by Afghani fighters in the presence of members of the American special forces in Meelawa, near Tora Bora (eastern Afghanistan). According to Agence France-Presse, the three photographers tried to get past a barrier set up by the local Afghani forces to keep journalists from reaching an area where the American commandos were searching caves used by now-routed men in the Al-Qaida terrorist network. But Joao Silva, Tyler Hicks and David Guttenfelder are turned back by mujahidin and an Afghani working for the American special forces. While they were taking pictures of the men of the American special forces, a soldier came up to them and took their names and photographed them. When they tried to leave the valley, they were blocked on the road by a group of mujahidin who threatened them with their Kalachnikov and brought them back to the command post. There the three photographers were mistreated and harassed for more than an hour, and their cameras and computers were confiscated. Two American soldiers passing by refused to help them, saying that they "knew very well what the journalists were doing", and that in any case they "had no control over the mujahidin". They then added, "But don't worry, they're not going to kill you." The three journalists finally recuperated their cameras and computers, but the mujahidin refused to give them back their digital disks containing the shots they had taken. According to David Guttenfelder, the American commandos themselves were the ones who had ordered the Afghanis to arrest them.

Sowing the Seeds of Revolution: An Interview with RAWA

The Japan Times–December 18, 2001 By Stephanie Coop

Does the end of Taliban rule mean that the people of Afghanistan can now look forward to a new era of peace and freedom? Not according to the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan, who believe that unless all fundamentalist groups in the country are disarmed, a repeat of the brutality and chaos of the pre-Taliban period is sure to follow. The Japan Times spoke with RAWA member Mariam Rawi about RAWA's activities and the crisis in Afghanistan during her visit to Tokyo earlier this month to accept the 2001 Asian Human Rights Award on behalf of the group.

Like other members of the group, RAWA spokeswoman Mariam Rawi uses a pseudonym and conceals her face when photographed because of continuing threats from fundamentalists.

What is your background? How did you become involved with RAWA?

I was born in 1974 in Kabul. My father, a freedom fighter against the Russians, was killed when I was 9 years old. Many of my uncles and cousins were also arrested or killed by the puppet regime. I do not have any brothers, so after my father died my mother, my other four sisters and my grandmother were all alone. Like many other families, we left Afghanistan and went to Pakistan, to a refugee camp in Quetta, a city near the Afghan border. I lived in the camp without access to education for two years, but then I was able to join a school run by RAWA. After I graduated I continued working with RAWA.

I notice you don't wear a headscarf; are you a Muslim? What about the other women in RAWA?

I'm a Muslim, yes, and so are the other women. But religion for us is a personal matter. RAWA has a close relationship with many different organizations and individual supporters around the world, with people from many nationalities and religions. They help us in different ways and of course we respect their religions. Ninety-nine percent of the Afghan population is Muslim, and we ourselves are all Muslim and respect the religion of our people.

Is there any particular reason you use the word "revolutionary" in your name?

(Laughs) "Revolutionary" is a word that scares everyone. But we believe that as an independent political and social organization of women, as the only group of women fighting against fundamentalism in a backward, male-dominated society, we are doing revolutionary work. But the weapon we use is education, not violence; that's how we can change the mentality of our men, women and the next generation.

RAWA has always condemned all fundamentalist groups and refused to compromise with them; are you ever criticized for being too extreme?

Yes, of course, but we are the voice of our people, especially the voice of our women. What they feel and what they say is much stronger than what RAWA says. If you go and interview an ordinary woman, whose son was killed by one of the factions, whose husband was killed, whose daughter was raped, who has lost everything, and then was not allowed to have a job, and had to become a prostitute or start begging in the street to survive, what she feels and says doesn't even compare to our position.

Does your strong antifundamentalist stance make it dangerous for you to work in Pakistan?

Yes, we have a lot of security problems there. The Pakistani government recognized the Taliban and supports fundamentalist groups. We have received death threats and been attacked, beaten and arrested when we try to hold peaceful demonstrations. Even when we sell our publications, the Pakistani police usually disturb us, and they always try to follow us so they can find out our address and contacts. That's the reason we cannot have an open, official RAWA office.

How has RAWA's work been affected since the U.S. military campaign began?

We have had to stop our work temporarily in some areas inside Afghanistan because of deteriorating security and danger from U.S. attacks. We also had problems because of increased pressure from the Taliban side before they fell; in Kabul, for example, they were constantly searching houses before they withdrew from the city so it was too dangerous for us to continue our activities.

In the meantime, our work on the other side of the border has become much more difficult. We've been very busy giving interviews and taking journalists to our projects and the refugee camps. Besides this, we have been providing shelter, food, blankets and medicine for newly arrived refugees and helping them cross the border, which is not easy. Before coming here I spent a week in the Jalozai refugee camp near Peshawar to help distribute supplies from RAWA.

What was the situation like in that camp?

About 100,000 refugees have arrived at Jalozai and Akora Khatak -- another camp near Peshawar -- since September, which is a lot more than normal. It's very cold in the camps because the only shelter is plastic tents, and there's no water or electricity. People have to cross the mountains on foot to get there, and by the time they arrive they are usually sick because of the cold and because of walking for such a long time. Many women have miscarriages during the journey, and many children die.

Have the refugees in these camps left Afghanistan because of the U.S. bombing?

Yes, many have fled the bombing, of course, but there were also many from Kabul, who fled because they're afraid of the Northern Alliance.

The media has portrayed the Northern Alliance as the liberators of Afghanistan; is that how ordinary Afghan people see the situation?

I think the world media, especially the Western media, have always played a very negative role toward Afghanistan. For quite a long time Afghanistan was forgotten absolutely. Then after Sept. 11, the media focused on Afghanistan, but in a very negative way, because they talked as if the Taliban was the only problem and completely forgot the four years between 1992 and 1996, when the Northern Alliance, under the name of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, controlled Kabul.

Those four years were one of the darkest periods in our history. Different commanders controlled different parts of the country, and they used their rockets and their bombs against each other and against our own people. Just for revenge, when an opposition group captured a new area, they would rape women, kill men, women and children, loot houses and execute people. Many young girls committed suicide because they were afraid of being raped, or were killed after they were raped, and many women were kidnapped. There was no security.

More than 50,000 people were killed in Kabul during those four years, and it's absolutely forgotten by the world. It's interesting that the media talked about the Taliban destroying the Buddha statues, but they don't talk about the fact that it was first of all the Northern Alliance groups who completely destroyed and looted Kabul Museum. People, especially women, will not forget and forgive the crimes and atrocities the fundamentalists committed in those four years.

We should remember that in 1996 the Taliban were welcomed by our own people, because they suffered for more than four years from the atrocities of the Northern Alliance groups and they thought the Taliban would bring peace and security. Of course, we soon learned that they were no different from their Northern Alliance brothers.

Now it's all happening again as the Northern Alliance increase their power. There's absolutely no sign of security and peace. So how can we say that the Taliban and the Northern Alliance are different? RAWA still has to operate in secret inside Afghanistan because the basic conditions are the same; the fundamentalists are still in power and they are aware of our contribution to exposing their crimes.

How have ordinary people reacted to the U.S. military campaign?

This is a very difficult point for our people, because on the one hand they suffered terribly from the Taliban and were happy to see the end of their government, but on the other hand they have also suffered from the U.S. attack, which has resulted in the deaths of hundreds of innocent people. You can see that people didn't react to the attack as if it was aggression, like they did to the Russian invasion. The Taliban announced everywhere that it was a jihad against foreign aggression and people must do the same as they did with Russia, but everyone just laughed. To them it was stupid to fight against America because it was clear that the U.S. wanted to finish off the Taliban government.

But we also know that the situation was the result of the very inhumane and unjust policies of foreign countries such as the U.S. and other Western countries, along with Russia, Iran, Pakistan and Saudia Arabia, which over the years gave a lot of support and help to fundamentalist groups. These fundamentalist groups became powerful, took over Afghanistan, and of course they got out of control. Perhaps the U.S. government never thought that there would be danger from its own creation; maybe it thought that the atrocities would take place only in Afghanistan, that only the women of Afghanistan would suffer, and that only things in Afghanistan would be destroyed.

But as we have seen, they were able to destroy the World Trade Center in New York, too. The U.S. government seems to have forgotten absolutely that it was the Northern Alliance groups -- the Islamic State of Afghanistan before the Taliban -- that welcomed Osama bin Laden to Afghanistan and issued him an Afghan passport. We believe that if the Northern Alliance is given any kind of support or any kind of chance, there will be another bin Laden and another al-Qaeda network in the future.

Do you see a brighter future for women in Afghanistan now that the Taliban has been removed from power?

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

"SOWING SEEDS" CONTINUED

It's clear that the problem women in Afghanistan face is fundamentalism itself -- not just whether or not we have to wear a burqa or whether we are allowed to go to the cinema. And the Northern Alliance are fundamentalists. The difference between the Northern Alliance and the Taliban in regards to women's rights is that the Northern Alliance carried out their crimes and brutalities against women without announcing them, but the Taliban made them official rules. For example, when the Northern Alliance, who were the first to call schools for girls "gateways to hell," were in power, many women were afraid to go to work or to school because they were afraid of being kidnapped or raped. But when the Taliban came, they said officially and clearly that women were not allowed to go outside the house or to have jobs or get an education.

Now it is the fashion for everyone to talk about women's rights, and that's why even the leaders of the Northern Alliance are talking about democracy and women's rights, but we do not believe that they have changed their attitude.

Was RAWA invited to take part in the recent Bonn talks?

Yes, one of our members was invited to be a part of the king's delegation. But she wasn't allowed to register officially under the name of RAWA because of pressure from the fundamentalists in the other three delegations, and even from some people in the king's delegation. We've always made it clear that around the king there are many people who are in a kind of compromise with the fundamentalist groups, who are afraid of them, and are afraid of slogans like democracy and secularism in Afghanistan.

Do you think the inclusion of women in the talks and the selection of two women to be in the interim government will help improve the situation for women in Afghanistan?

Women taking part in government, anywhere in the world, is a positive change, of course, and can be the start of more positive change in the future. But we believe that the only measure of judging whether someone qualifies as a true representative of women is whether they are clearly and strongly against fundamentalism, because that is the most dangerous enemy of our women. And unfortunately many of the women who took part in the talks either compromise with the fundamentalists, or are directly related to them, like Amena Afzali, who was in the Northern Alliance's delegation.

Sima Samar, the new Women's Affairs minister, is a member of the Central Committee of the Hezb-e-Wahdat, the United Party, which is a Hazara fundamentalist group, one of the most brutal and hated, that is supported by the Iranian government and is based in central Afghanistan. So how can she be truly representative of all women when she has such a position in that party? To be a representative of women, it's not enough to just be a woman. Of course, she is female, but she is not antifundamentalist, and to be truly representative of women you must be against fundamentalism, which unfortunately she is not.

The coverage of her in the media has been very positive, saying she runs a health center in Pakistan where she is regarded as a local heroine among the people she works with; there hasn't been any mention of her fundamentalist connections.

Of course, if someone runs a hospital, whether fundamentalist or nonfundamentalist, people will want go there for health care. And because she is a Hazara, working basically with the Hazar people, they will trust her more easily. But the important point is her political standpoint, and politically she stands on the side of the fundamentalists.

What would RAWA like the international community to do politically in regards to Afghanistan? Do you think the interim government will be able to bring peace to the country?

We've always said that the United Nations, the U.S. government and other Western countries must stop supporting fundamentalist groups and pressure countries like Pakistan to stop supporting fundamentalist groups, but unfortunately they have never listened. It's not a new alternative. Even when Meena was in Europe in 1981, she said that fundamentalism could be more dangerous than the Russians, and today we see the proof of what she said.

Peacekeeping troops must be sent to Afghan-istan immediately; otherwise it will end up just like before, and the talks will have been a waste of time. The fundamentalist groups must be disarmed, and their leaders recognized as war criminals and brought before an international court. The whole world is demanding the arrest of bin Laden and Taliban members because they are responsible for the horrible terrorist attacks on the U.S. and the blood of (more than 3,000) Americans, but the Northern Alliance leaders are responsible for the blood of at least 50,000 Afghans, and I think these victims deserve justice too.

The international community shouldn't be trying to get the fundamentalist leaders to cooperate with each other. They committed horrible atrocities even when they were weak and divided; if they become stronger and more united, what will they do then? Any attempt to unite these enemies and make them the only alternative is absolutely not a good solution; it is the same thing, indirectly if not directly, as being against our people.

The Northern Alliance is the biggest military force at the moment, and they hold key positions in the interim government: the Interior Ministry, Foreign Ministry and Defense Ministry. That's why we say that our only hope is the role of the United Nations and what they do. If they leave Afghanistan in this situation and just say OK, here's your new government, we are absolutely sure that there will be war and fighting again and a continuation of the same situation as in the past.

RAWA was founded in 1977 to fight for women's rights, secularism and democracy in Afghanistan. It played an active role in the resistance against the occupation by Soviet forces in the 1980s, organizing demonstrations and meetings at schools and universities in Kabul to mobilize public opinion. It also established schools and health services to assist the flood of Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

In 1981 it began publishing Payam-e-Zan (Women's Voice), a magazine advocating women's rights and exposing human rights violations by Afghan fundamentalist groups. The success of its activities attracted the enmity of authorities and religious fundamentalists alike. RAWA founder Meena was assassinated in Pakistan by KGB agents in 1987.

Since the fall of the Russian puppet government, RAWA has focused on fighting fundamentalism, which it believes is the greatest enemy of Afghan women. It has documented abuses by the Northern Alliance government of 1992-96 and by the recently ousted Taliban regime. RAWA runs secret schools, literacy programs and mobile health services in Afghanistan to help women gain awareness of their rights and provides desperately needed medical care.

Despite severe financial limitations the group has managed to keep its social programs in Pakistan and Afghanistan running, although it must work secretly in Afghanistan because of ongoing security problems.

For more information on RAWA, see the Web site at www.rawa.org.

Bush Taps Conservative for AIDS Council

Gay.com/PlanetOut.com Network– January 23, 2002 by Ann Rostow,

President George W. Bush is to name conservative former Congressman Tom Coburn, R-Okla., as co-chair of the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS, the Associated Press reports.

Coburn, an obstetrician who represented Oklahoma's normally Democratic 2nd District from 1994 to 2000, has simultaneously championed AIDS funding and placed himself in diametric opposition to the gay community.

During the 2000 election, Coburn endorsed the extreme right candidacy of Alan Keyes, calling him "the one candidate for president who actually understands what is wrong with our country, and who has the vision, the courage and the clarity of principle to put it right." In October of 1999, Coburn won the American Freedom Award from the American Association of Christian Schools, which called him "one of the toughest and most consistent conservatives" in public office.

In the course of his three terms in Congress, Coburn voted for the Defense of Marriage Act and against gay adoptions, affirmative action, partial birth abortions and flag burning. In his role as a doctor, Coburn took the lead in the fight against HIV and AIDS, but did so in a manner that drew both praise and criticism. Coburn has questioned the efficacy of condoms, denounced needle exchange and called for names reporting.

Anti-Terror Campaign Cloaking Human Rights Abuses

(Washington, January 16, 2002) -- The anti-terror campaign led by the United States is inspiring opportunistic attacks on civil liberties around the world, Human Rights Watch warned in its annual global survey released today. At the same time, the campaign offers a chance to focus attention on the denial of human rights and democracy in the Middle East and Central Asia, where authoritarian governments have left millions of people with a choice between extremist politics and no politics. Many of these authoritarian governments cling to power without challenge from Western governments.

The 670-page Human Rights Watch World Report 2002 includes summaries of human rights events in 2001 in 66 countries, as well as analyses of U.S. and European foreign policy, refugee issues, international justice, corporate social responsibility, and the weapons trade.

Some countries, such as Russia, Uzbekistan, and Egypt, are using the war on terror to justify abusive military campaigns or crackdowns on domestic political opponents. In the United States and Western Europe, measures designed to combat terrorism are threatening long-held human rights principles. Human Rights Watch is an international monitoring organization based in New York. It accepts no financial support from any government.

The Treatment of al-Qaeda and Taliban Prisoners by the United States Offends a Sense of Justice

The Observer (UK)–Sunday January 13, 2002

by Peter Beaumont

Imagine the scene. A group of alleged Irish terrorists is seized and handed over to the British Government by a third country. They are held without access to any lawyers. Some are threatened by interrogating intelligence officers. They are told that if they don't tell them what they want to know then they might simply 'disappear'. Some of the men are tortured while being held in prison and forced into confessing that they are members of a terrorist organisation.

These men are drugged and bound and then flown out of the country to an island camp, where lawyers are appointed for them but where the normal guarantees of defendants' rights do not apply. Those lawyers cannot appeal for their release - no mechanism exists - nor can they challenge their extradition or the criteria for it.

In that island camp, they will face an emergency military tribunal that has the right to kill them. Confronted with these gross violations, the international media and human rights organisations would rightly be up in arms in protest.

Yesterday, a group of unidentified men, including a Briton, completed a journey identical in almost every detail to the one described above. Manacled, with some sedated, they were chained to their seats in the aircraft that delivered them. The difference is that this group of 20 men were alleged terrorists with the Taliban and al-Qaeda and their destination was the US base at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba. The difference, too, is that what complaint there has been about their treatment has been curiously muted.

The reality of what is happening to the prisoners of Afghanistan is a scandal of international proportions. Brutalised, often tortured, these are men who have been stripped of their most basic rights under international and US law, rights guaranteed at the International Tribunal in the Hague even for the alleged architects of the genocide in Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

In a few deft strokes, the administration of President George W. Bush has dropped a 'daisycutter' not only on the Geneva Conventions, designed to protect the rights of prisoners of war, but also America's own constitutional guarantees for defendants.

It is possible, even likely, that many of these people committed terrible crimes - some many even have had foreknowledge of the attacks of 11 September - but their special treatment presupposes a special guilt.

They are the kind of people, we are assured, after all, by General Richard B. Myers, US Chief of the Joint Staffs, who are so 'dangerous that they would gnaw through the hydraulic cables' on their transport plane to bring it down.

It is a description appropriate to an animal, not to a man.

A few weeks ago, I was in Afghanistan looking for some of these almost mythically self-destructive creatures. The first man we tried to see was an elderly Taliban official our fixer had come across at an anti-Taliban base in the suburbs of the former Taliban stronghold of Kandahar.

When our fixer saw him, he was being beaten slowly and methodically to death by a local warlord. We reached the camp too late. When we arrived, the man who had been doing the beating told us that he no longer had any Taliban prisoners. They had buried some al-Qaeda fighters that day whom they had killed in the liberation of the city, he told us. We asked again about the prisoner. He clarified the situation: 'There are no prisoners any longer.'

It was not an isolated incident. Ten days later, I found myself with a group of Western journalists in the office of the governor of the Third Directorate prison in Kabul.

Abdul Qayum, a lean and hard-faced man in his fifties, had been promising for a week to let reporters see his prisoners and check on their conditions. He told us he was both jailer and the man who leads the interrogations. He told us, too, that he regarded the Taliban and al-Qaeda as indistinguishable.

So how, we asked, does he persuade them to confess? 'We ask them in a friendly and Islamic way to confess their crimes,' he explained to us. 'If they do not confess, then we use force.'

If one cannot condone this sort of behaviour, perhaps one can understand it in a virtual state, stripped of its institutions and atomised by two decades of war. But the role of America and its allies in the maltreatment of the Taliban and al-Qaeda prisoners defies comprehension.

What is most alarming are the potential consequences of those beaten and forced confessions in the context of the legal process that has been constructed for the al-Qaeda prisoners. For the torture, threats and humiliation of the Taliban and al-Qaeda prisoners in Afghanistan's jails pale into insignificance before the cynical acrobatics that Geroge Bush's administration has gone through to strip these prisoners of their most basic rights to a fair legal process.

Let's start with the Geneva Conventions. Not the obvious stuff like the proscriptions on summary executions (witnessed across the country as the Taliban fell), or torture (see above), or the humiliating and degrading treatment (parading prisoners for the international media), but the niggly details of legal process.

Details like the proscription on the handing-over of prisoners of war to a third party that is not a party to the war, which America insists implausibly to the International Committee for the Red Cross that it is not; in other words, the US claims that it is merely assisting the anti-Taliban forces rather than prosecuting a war. Or the little detail that insists that those prisoners must be tried by regularly constituted courts, not military tribunals constituted under emergency powers.

If they are combatants - and prisoners of war - acting under orders, then, as the US Supreme Court's ex parte Quirin ruling declared in 1942 in the case of a group of German saboteurs seized in America in the Second World War, they 'are subject [only] to capture and detention as prisoners of war by opposing military forces'.

But then, say Mr Bush's advisers, including Attorney-General John Ashcroft and Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, these aren't prisoners of war. These are men who fought without uniforms. They bore their weapons in secret for a criminal organisation without a formal legal command. They are criminals, they argue, 'unlawful combatants', and therefore not covered by the protections of the Geneva Conventions.

And there lies the source of the Bush administration's greatest contortions. For if the prisoners of Guantanamo Bay are not covered by the 'laws of war', then they are ordinary criminals. And the rights of ordinary - and even extraordinary - criminals are guaranteed by the US Constitution.

The Sixth Amendment, in case Mr Bush has forgotten, insists that in 'all criminal prosecutions' in the United States inalienable rights apply. Those rights include the right to a jury trial, a right underlined by case law in the US Supreme Court that insists that if the civilian courts are open and functioning then the armed forces cannot convene a military tribunal to try offences that fall within the jurisdiction of civilian courts.

So if the prisoners of Guantanamo Bay are not criminals or combatants, what are they?

They are the examples that America feels it needs to make before the world, condemned before the fact by their alleged membership of a criminal association. They are triply damned, one suspects, by their nationality, religion and the colour of their skins.

NAPALC Announces Launch of Online Interactive Map on Website Includes Geographical Breakdown of Anti-Asian Pacific American Attacks Since 9- 11

The National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium (NAPALC) announced the establishment of an online interactive map that includes a geographical breakdown of anti-Asian Pacific American hate incidents since September 11. NAPALC and its Affiliates-the Asian Pacific American Legal Center, Asian Law Caucus and the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund-along with community-based organizations such as the South Asian American Leaders of Tomorrow and the Sikh Coalition, the media, and individuals, have documented and reported approximately 250 bias-motivated incidents against South Asian Americans across the nation.

In addition to the map, the website provides information on legislation which has passed since 9/11, government response, and facts on racial profiling. It is also links to other websites which offer assistance specific to legal issues, language translation, general victims assistance, community advocacy and psychological counseling. The website also provides preventive information for hate incidents and a printable form to report hate crimes, which will soon be available as an online reporting form.

The NAPALC (www.napalc.org) is a national civil rights organization dedicated to advancing and defending the civil rights of Asian Pacific Americans. See the site for the map.

We are always looking for quality news items on a local, national and international scale.

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Oil company adviser named US representative to Afghanistan

By Patrick Martin (excerpt)

http://www.wsws.org/articles/2002/jan2002/oil-j03.shtml

President Bush has appointed a former aide to the American oil company Unocal, Afghan-born Zalmay Khalilzad, as special envoy to Afghanistan. The nomination was announced December 31, nine days after the US-backed interim government of Hamid Karzai took office in Kabul. The nomination underscores the real economic and financial interests at stake in the US military intervention in Central Asia. Khalilzad is intimately involved in the long-running US efforts to obtain direct access to the oil and gas resources of the region, largely unexploited but believed to be the second largest in the world after the Persian Gulf.

Khalilzad was a special adviser to the State Department during the Reagan administration, lobbying successfully for accelerated US military aid to the mujahedin, including hand-held Stinger anti-aircraft missiles which played a key role in the war. He later became undersecretary of defense in the administration of Bush's father, during the US war against Iraq, then went to the Rand Corporation, a top US military think tank.

After Bush was installed as president by a 5-4 vote of the US Supreme Court, Khalilzad headed the Bush-Cheney transition team for the Defense Department and advised incoming Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. Significantly, however, he was not named to a subcabinet position, which would have required Senate confirmation and might have provoked uncomfortable questions about his role as an oil company adviser in Central Asia and intermediary with the Taliban. Instead, he was named to the National Security Council, where no confirmation vote was needed.

At the NSC Khalilzad reports to Condoleeza Rice, the national security adviser, who also served as an oil company consultant on Central Asia. After serving in the first Bush administration from 1989 to 1992, Rice was placed on the board of directors of Chevron Corporation and served as its principal expert on Kazakhstan, where Chevron holds the largest concession of any of the international oil companies.

On November 28 the White House released a statement hailing the official opening of the first new pipeline by the Caspian Pipeline Consortium, a joint venture of Russia, Kazakhstan, Oman, ChevronTexaco, and several other oil companies. The pipeline connects the huge Tengiz oilfield in northwestern Kazakhstan to the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiysk, where tankers are loaded for the world market. US companies put up $1 billion of the $2.65 billion construction cost.

There was little US press coverage of this announcement. Nor did the media refer to the fact that the pipeline consortium involved in the Baku-Ceyhan plan, led by the British oil company BP, is represented by the law firm of Baker & Botts. The principal attorney at this firm is James Baker III, secretary of state under Bush's father and chief spokesman for the 2000 Bush campaign during its effort to shut down the Florida vote recount.

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Israel's dead end, by Edward Said (excerpt)

http://www.ahram.org.eg/weekly/2001/565/op1.htm / Al-Ahram Online / 20-26 Dec. 2001

"The earth is closing on us, pushing us through the last passage, and we tear off our limbs to pass through." Thus Mahmoud Darwish, writing in the aftermath of the PLO's exit from Beirut in September 1982. "Where should we go after the last frontiers? Where should the birds fly after the last sky?"

19 years later, what was happening then to the Palestinians in Lebanon is happening to them in Palestine. Since the Al-Aqsa Intifada began last September, Palestinians have been sequestered by the Israeli army in no fewer than 220 discontinuous little ghettos, and subjected to intermittent curfews often lasting for weeks at a stretch. No one, young or old, sick or well, dying or pregnant, student or doctor, can move without spending hours at barricades, manned by rude and deliberately humiliating Israeli soldiers. As I write, 200 Palestinians are unable to receive kidney dialysis, because for "security reasons" the Israeli military won't allow them to travel to medical centres. Have any of the innumerable members of the foreign media covering the conflict done a story about these brutalised young Israelis conscripts, trained to punish Palestinian civilians as the main part of their military duty? I think not.

Yasser Arafat was not allowed to leave his office in Ramallah to attend the emergency meeting of the Islamic Conference foreign ministers on 10 December in Qatar; his speech was read by an aide. The airport 15 miles away in Gaza and Arafat's two ageing helicopters had been destroyed the previous week by Israeli planes and bulldozers, with no one and no force to check, much less prevent, the daily incursions of which this particular feat of military daring was a part. Gaza Airport was the only direct port of entry into Palestinian territory, the only civilian airport in the world wantonly destroyed since World War II. Since last May, Israeli F-16s (generously supplied by the US) have regularly bombed and strafed Palestinian towns and villages, Guernica-style, destroying property and killing civilians and security officials (there is no Palestinian army, navy, or air force to protect the people); Apache attack helicopters (again supplied by the US) have used their missiles to murder 77 Palestinian leaders, for alleged terrorist offences, past or future. A group of unknown Israeli intelligence operatives have the authority to decide on these assassinations, presumably with the approval on each occasion of the Israeli Cabinet, and more generally, that of the US. The helicopters have also done an efficient job of bombing Palestinian Authority installations, police as well as civilian. During the night of 5 December, the Israeli army entered the five-story offices of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in Ramallah and carried off the computers, as well as most of the files and reports, thereby effacing virtually the entire record of collective Palestinian life. In 1982, the same army under the same commander entered West Beirut and carted off documents and files from the Palestinian Research Centre, before flattening its structure. A few days later came the massacres of Sabra and Shatila.

The suicide bombers of Hamas and Islamic Jihad have of course been at work, as Sharon knew perfectly well they would be when, after a 10-day lull in the fighting in late November, he suddenly ordered the murder of the Hamas leader Mahmoud Abu Hanoud: an act designed to provoke Hamas into retaliation and thus allow the Israeli army to resume the slaughter of Palestinians. After eight years of barren peace discussions, 50% of Palestinians are unemployed and 70% live in poverty on less than $2 a day. Every day brings with it unopposable land grabs and house demolitions. The Israelis even make a point of destroying trees and orchards on Palestinian land. Although 5 or 6 Palestinians have been killed in the last few months for every one Israeli, the old warmonger has the gall to keep repeating that Israel has been the victim of the same terrorism as that meted out by Bin Laden.

The crucial point in all this is that Israel has been in illegal military occupation since 1967; it is the longest such occupation in history and the only one anywhere in the world today. This is the original and continuing violence against which all the Palestinian acts of violence have been directed. On 10 December, for instance, two children aged three and 13 were killed by Israeli bombs in Hebron, yet at the same time an EU delegation was demanding that Palestinians curtail their violence and acts of terrorism. Five more Palestinians were killed on 11 December, all of them civilian, victims of helicopter bombings of Gaza's refugee camps. To make matters worse, as a result of the 11 September attacks, the word "terrorism" is being used to blot out legitimate acts of resistance against military occupation, and any causal or even narrative connection between the dreadful killing of civilians (which I have always opposed) and the 30-plus years of collective punishment is proscribed.

Every Western pundit or official who pontificates about Palestinian terrorism needs to ask how forgetting the fact of the occupation is supposed to stop terrorism. Arafat's great mistake, a consequence of frustration and poor advice, was to try to make a deal with the occupation when he authorised "peace" discussions between scions of two prominent Palestinian families and Mossad in 1992 at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in Cambridge. These discussions only discussed Israeli security; nothing at all was said about Palestinian security, nothing at all, and the struggle of his people to achieve an independent state was left to one side. The Israeli mistake has been to imagine that by conning Arafat and his coterie into interminable discussions and tiny concessions, it would get general Palestinian quiescence. Every official Israeli policy thus far has made things worse rather than better for Israel. Ask yourself: is Israel more secure and more accepted now than it was 10 years ago?

The terrible and, in my opinion, stupid suicide raids against civilians in Haifa and Jerusalem over the weekend of 1 December should of course be condemned, but in order for these condemnations to make any sense, the raids must be considered in the context of Abu Hanoud's assassination earlier in the week, along with the killing of five children by an Israeli booby trap in Gaza – to say nothing of the houses destroyed, the Palestinians killed throughout Gaza and the West Bank, the constant tank incursions, the endlessly grinding away of Palestinian aspirations, minute by minute, for the past 35 years. In the end, desperation only produces poor results, none worse than the green light George W and Colin Powell seem to have given Sharon when he was in Washington on 2 December (all too reminiscent of the green light Alexander Haig gave Sharon in May 1982).

The slowly emerging group of Palestinians, both in Palestine and in the Diaspora, is beginning to learn and use tactics that solidly place a moral onus on the West and Israel to address the issue of Palestinian rights, not just of the Palestinian presence. In Israel, for example, an audacious Knesset member, the Palestinian Azmi Bishara, has been stripped of his parliamentary immunity and will soon be on trial for incitement to violence. Why? Because he has long stood for the Palestinian right of resistance to occupation, arguing that, like every other state in the world, Israel should be the state of all of its citizens, not just of the Jewish people. For the first time, a major Palestinian challenge on Palestinian rights is being mounted inside Israel (not on the West Bank), with all eyes on the proceedings. At the same time, the Belgian attorney-general's office has confirmed that a war crimes case against Sharon can go forward in that country's courts. A painstaking mobilisation of secular Palestinian opinion is underway and will slowly overtake the Palestinian Authority. The moral high ground will soon be reclaimed from Israel, as the occupation becomes the focus of attention and as more and more Israelis realise that there is no way to continue indefinitely a 35-year occupation.

Besides, as the US war against terrorism spreads, more unrest is almost certain; far from closing things down, US power is likely to stir them up in ways that may not be containable. It's no mean irony that the renewed attention on Palestine came about because the US and Europeans need to maintain an anti-Taliban coalition.

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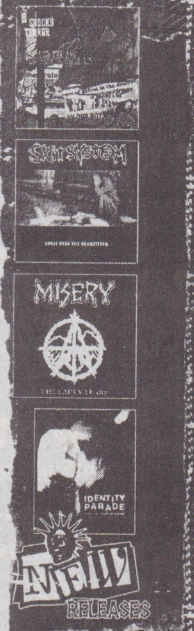

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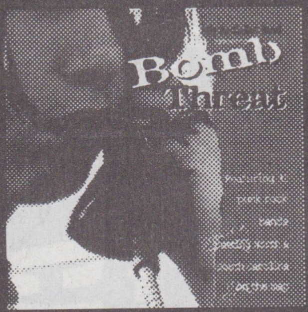

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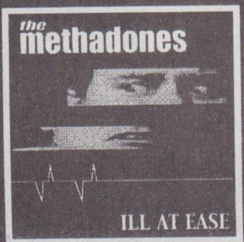

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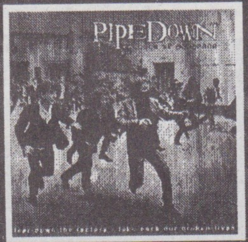

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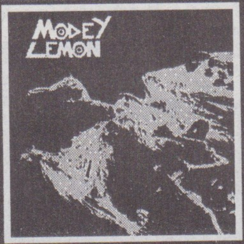

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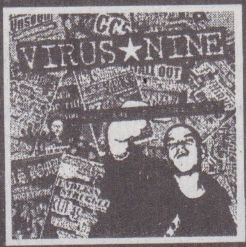

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SCENES

There have been two scene reports that we here in Winnipeg can remember. One was by Chris Follet of Global Genocide in '87/ '88 that prominently featured Global Genocide and the other was by Chris Oleson in '89 that prominently featured Chris Oleson. Ha. Both of these were a wee bit before my time, but things have been happening here ever since I can remember. Because I hear too many people saying "the punk scene is kinda dead in Winnipeg these days", I offer the following report on some of the goings-ons around here.

BANDS

The kings of rock, Propagandhi are home from touring. They have put some live tracks from their Summit of the Americas show up on their site as mp3 (www.g7welcomingcommittee .com/ propagandhi/audio.shtml). They will spend their winter working on a next release, and building upon multi-media of the Today's Empires, Tomorrow's Ashes LP. The Weakerthans are on a compilation with Jan Arden. Malefaction, another bunch of old timers, are on hiatus until sometime in 2002. They play brutal, brutal shit, but they aren't from a major US city, so no one. He Broke is a good metallic technical riff machine. They have "The Live Demo", a five song CD released May 2001 available with a full length coming out February 2002. They're exciting to watch live. I play in a band in town called Head Hits Concrete. We have been together for over two years now. We have one EP available and have just recorded for a split with My Minds Mine to be released on Sounds Of Betrayal Records. We play grindcore, the stuff that went out of style three years ago. Guns Liquor & Whores are a new group of kids playing Japanese and Scandinavian thrash. They're really great. They'll have a demo and comp. tracks recorded by the time you read this. Slobberknocker

write songs that I think are influenced by A.C. Very short songs, hilariousness between songs during their live set, and a great overall attitude. They have a new CD. I look forward to hearing it. The Blasphemenaut are a three-piece grindcore band with a sequencer providing the harsh beats. I almost broke my nose at one of their most recent gigs. Super awesome, very prone to covering old Kreator. The Last Language is a screamy 'post' hardcore band that have yet to play many shows. A demo CD which will include a video should be out March sometime, it may be a lot sooner. The Host Body are a hardcore punk band that is in the works in my basement. Nancy, Andrea and Brad will be playing shows as soon as they successfully rip off a few more Anomie (France) riffs. Moving on to the poppier front, Sixty Stories have been playing out long enough to have released a four-song demo as well as a split CD with unreleased Painted Thin stuff. They've been out West of Winnipeg and they just got back from Germany. There is a good chance you've caught them by now. If not, check them out if you're into Discount-esque rock tunes. Speaking of rock, The Paperbacks have some stuff out. Doug ex-Bonaduce is the front person in this band. His lyrics always impress me. Stright up catchy rock-pop stuff. The Projektor, another big Winnipeg rock band with guys who've been in bands forever. Check them out if you're into mellower and stll intense stuff. They have a full length on Endearing. Eunuch are dead, a posthumous CD is available. They sounded more like Eric's Tip than say, the Promise Ring. I have yet to check out. It's been on the college charts for months although twenty people would go see them when they were around. I think there's a conspiracy at the college radio station. I haven't seen 11 Years In August, but they're damn good I'm told, and their demo sounds like they play some decent emo/punk music. And finally, the artists formerly known as FucThat, now known as Fast Track are playing out frequently. In terms of non-godlicking hardcore, Winnipeg has a couple of bands worth mentioning. Reality's End are the most prolific, playing about once a week. No ridiculous metal riffs, no bullshit bible studies and no recordings that I know of. They are the amalgamation of Agnostic Front and Negative Approach. Defiantly see them. I have no idea what Change Up is about, they're new. KEN Mode play a mixture of interesting sounds and are most likely the loudest band in town. They are self proclaimed "noise rock". Their songs are getting harsher all the time. They have most recently recorded for a Dazzling Killman tribute CD as well as a yet to be released CD. Standstill are the newest band in town to take pointers from the Rev.HQ. Emo and hard rock and some Maiden thrown in for good measure. Not bad. Hey, Ditchpig are back after a long hiatus. I grew up on those guys. Scott Hopper and Doug have been around forever getting wasted and playing some really old school shit. No one writes songs anymore the way that Ditchpig write them. Catch them in one of the many bars around town. The Vagiants play loud, exciting rock and roll. They're all great folks too. A demo will come out someday. Stagmummer has some stuff on Sudden Death Records and I believe they are dead. The Insaniacs are probably the best punk outfit in town. Rude, obnoxious and cool songs about baby Jesus. They play enough cover tunes for there to be no excuse why you can't get down. Folks think they sounds like Black Flag. I like them, so you could go check them out if you want to see a punk band play for over an hour long. I have only seen The Switchblade Sisters once, and I was fucking super hung over and didn't catch very much of it, but if you like 3 chords and old, old, old punk rock, they may just be your thing. Another band I saw recently was The Martian Graverobbers. They probably spend too much time ripping on emo

kids, but they sure can put on a good show. The Baby Shakers have just invited me to go see them sometime. No idea what they play, but knowing Pat, it'll be old punk rock. Liqurd! seems to be a drunk punks' dream. They have done all kinds of crazy shit live, mostly involving intoxication and mosh pits full of broken glass. They have some self-released stuff on CD and they've toured Western Canada. Rumour has it that Last Man On Earth will emerge from their 5 year hiatus to "show everybody how it's done". Folks may be surprised to learn the LMOE feature members of Propagandhi and I Spy playing full throttle/full contact thrash. Last time I saw them, they pissed their pants before the first song. They're "GG Allin without the heroin". I fought their bass player on stage last time they played, but now he's a jiu-jitsu master, so I don't think I'll do that again. And of course, we cannot forget the impending Corpus Vile reunion: featuring no original members, but Derek Riel on vocals!

HEAD HITS CONCRETE

Radio

Hey, both the University Of Winnipeg and the University of Manitoba have campus radio. Thank god for that. If I have to hear BJ and Hal in the morning one more time, I think I'm going to shoot myself in the face. Rock And Roll Juggernaut kick Saturday night off on UMFM 101.5 FM with a pop/punk/rock show. Derek Riel who provides the soothing emo sounds that bring you into your Sunday morning usually handles the airwaves after that, followed by another fourth wave emo band show. Behind the Barricades, a show hosted by Craig Penner and Dave Kibbins occurs at 10 p.m. on Mondays. Craig and Dale plays pop punk and some hardcore. Craig's brother Jason Penner follows him at 11:00 with Radio State, playing hardcore, grind and sometimes power electronics. Jesse, lead singer from KEN Mode hosts a diverse program Fridays at high noon. During Killing Time Dead Literally, Jesse spins pretty much what he feels like. You can expect to hear lots of Touch and Go, Relapse and Revelation stuff. Over at CKUW 99.5 FM, Mike Wachs or Sam Smith keep the hardcore flame alive on Monday nights at midnight with the show Back On The Map. Sam has the best radio personality of them all. He likes special guests on his show as well. Other shows worth mentioning are Midnight in the Eighth Dimension on CKUW as well as Cretin Radio Fridays 9-11 a.m. on UMFM, which I'm listening to as I type this.

LABELS

G-7 Welcoming Committee Records has just put out releases by Malefaction, Ward Churchill, the (International) Noise Conspiracy, as well as an OCAP benefit. Soon, you can look for new shizzat by Greg Macpherson and Randy. Crack Records have recently released a full length by Winnipegs Fast Track. Crack is working on 140 band/30 second song comp. Check their web site for details.Small Man Records is peddling the Painted Thin /Sixty Stories CD, as well as a new record by Ontario's Moneen. Endearing Records have stuff out currently by Julie Dorion, Readymade and Little Red Rocket. Coming later this year will be more stuff by Julie Doiron, as well as new material by such locals as Christine Fellows and Paper Moon. As far as other labels are concerned, there really isn't that much to report. Many bands are choosing to release their own music, which is great. Brad Skibinsky runs 12 Point Calcium Leeching Program, a distro/mail order that can sometimes be found at shows. He sells hardcore, grind, power violence, specializing in vinyl and international thrash/hardcore.

VENUES/PROMOTERS

Last August, the Manitoba Liquor Commission decided that bars can be open and serve alcohol on Sundays, which has negatively affected the all ages scene in Winnipeg. The Royal Albert Arms remains the place to be, although the excitement of Draft Night is long gone. The Albert is where all the 18+ punk shows occur. The Pyramid Cabaret and The Zoo are other locations where live punk rock can be taken in, although the Pyramid rips people off left, right and centre, i.e.: the Vagiants at the recent Bad Brains show. A new club, The Collective Cabaret does shows Sunday to Wendnesday as well. No one likes Le Rendez Vous anymore, ever since the riot that took place during The Dwarves last visit through town, but everyone still goes nonetheless. Makeshift venues seem like occasional options. Manner Farm played a basement. Three Penny Opera played in a common space above Mondragon Bookstore & Coffee House, our band recently played in a friend's basement as well. There are no houses with punk bands playing in their basements. The Broadway Neighborhood Centre is no longer doing shows in the basement, which was the venue of choice for all-ages shows for the past two summers. The West End Cultural Center's witch-hunt of punk bands continues, although it was some folk band who ultimately wrecked their dance floor a few years ago. For years, punk shows have been scapegoated for wrecking the place and thus causing a huge increase in rent for shows. If you're on Fat Records, or want to risk your shirt, you'll most likely enjoy the wonderful PA and liberal Liquor license that makes the West End the best venue in town. As far as promoters are concerned, I continue to do shows on a limited basis. If your band plays thrash, hardcore, grind or something remotely interesting to my ears, I can most likely get you a show that will make it worth your while. Contact me and perhaps we can work something out. Another guy, Greg, Scott, Wade, I don't know his name, books straight edge hardcore. I'm told he's very fair with bands, and I know he does a good job promoting his events. Mike/You As The Driver books bands in Altona, MB, which is a town of like 25. Travis Porter tends to promote emo shows. Adam Manveiler, from the Last Language has worked with bands such as The Red Light Sting, Buried Inside, The Vida Blue (border sucks) Trail vs Russia and Lungbutter. He helped out with Arsonfest. And Travis Porter works with emo bands.

ZINES

In addition to his radio program of the same name, Jason Penner does a zine called Radio State. I assist where possible. Mike from Altona, MB also does an online zine, You As The Driver. Kelsey Braun was doing a zine that focussed strictly on political issues called Charred Remains, but I'm not sure if he's planning on future issues. There is not much happening in terms of paper zines locally these days.

OTHER CRAP

I'm trying to shy away from talking too much about online anything, but if you plan on coming to Winnipeg, do check out the Mondragon Bookstore and Coffeehouse webpage. Click on "Visitor Info". Find a complete listing of vegan friendly places to shop and eat in town, suitable for all budgets. Mondragon, located on the main floor of 91 Albert, is where the hip activists hang out. In addition to housing Mondragon, 91 Albert (the A Zone) is a three story building. It is packed to the gills with organizations like Food Not Bombs, a lending library called Junto Local 91, Arbiter Ring Publishing, a bike repair shop and much more. There aren't many places to camp within city limits, and public pools can be free depending on the time of day. There are two decent music stores in town, we'll tell you all about them when you get here. Winnipeg is the largest French speaking population in Canada west of Quebec and we have the largest percentage of First Nations anywhere in Canada. And finally, I am involved in an annual extreme music Festival here called Arsonfest. We are looking for bands to play. No pop, no emo, fast and brutal works well for us.

ADDRESSES

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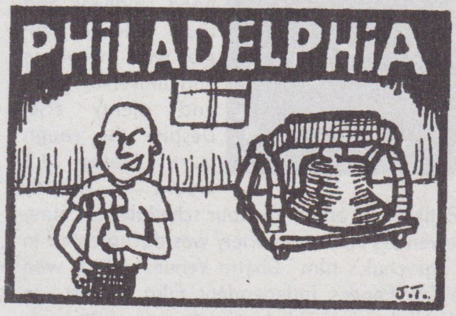
If I missed your band, zine, radio show or whatever, sorry. It's (in most cases) not because I think you're an asshole, but because I don't know anything/can't find anything about you. If your grind/hardcore band needs a show in town, or if you have any questions about this, scene report, Email me at defechrist@hotmail.com Thanks.



PHILADELPHIA PUNK 1998-2001

Set to write a scene report for *Maximum Rocknroll*, I soon found myself confronted with a big, but exciting challenge. Philadelphia punk, or at least *my* perception of Philadelphia punk, seemed to have little to do with the "punk scene" at large. While Philadelphia has a rich history of great bands and intense shows, it was not the killer pits, the widely sold 7"s or the reputation to produce quality HC music that I kept finding myself smiling about. It wasn't a listing of "cheap veggie eats" and crash pads that made me continually organize shows, write music or tour. Philadelphia is home to a very special community of bands, people, groups and memories that I think many who feel a part of it cherish on a really deep level. After · 11 years 'in the scene,' I feel I can only comment on the small subset of the scene which I feel comprises my family.

Creating an all ages underground music scene outside of the realm of clubs and bars was an extremely challenging task for the people who peppered Philly's punk past. Sandwiched between NYC and DC, a real underdog sentiment pervaded much of the scene's consciousness until suddenly an unassuming warehouse became one of the dominant venues in the international punk/HC scene. Philly punk suddenly found itself with many unexpected eyes turned towards its bands and organizers, at a time when its activism and music scene were still struggling to create a mutual balance. This is an attempt to share one perspective of a creative punk community which is becoming increasingly recognized outside the confines of its own design, as it struggles to redefine its own identity. Like Punk in general, Philadelphia does not have one, single scene, but rather a conglomeration of people interested in different genres, styles, each pursuing their own agendas. I am excited by the events which have transpired over the last 2-3 years because I think they have created the foundation for a very unique type of scene which holds a great deal of promise, embodying all the elements I find to be inspiring and amazing about punk.

WHAT THEY HAVE MADE, WE DESTROY: THE EMERGENCE OF DIY PUNK

High-rent, unreceptive neighbors and businesses, increased police presence and competition from commercial venues has for years relegated Philadelphia's underground music scene to the neighborhoods of the city, predominantly the city's West side with its sizable Victorian homes, university properties, a rich history of radical politics, and a diverse population of students, working class families, longtime residents and African immigrants.

For decades, this region had been the home to Philadelphia's radical community, boasting a dizzying list of activist group houses. Groups such as ACT UP (AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power), WHAM (Women's Health Action Mobilization), Bike Coalition and a resurgent MOVE! had helped form a strong foundation for what would eventually become the activist circuit of the mid to late '90s and beyond. Already art and music were establishing autonomous spaces of their own. Warehouses such as The Killtime and FakeHaus began hosting punk concerts, indie theater and dance parties as early as the early '80s–the connection between radical art and radical activism seemed natural in the "city of brotherly love."

In the late '80s, the city officially outlawed skateboarding on the steps and grounds of City Hall, an elaborate piece of Colonial architecture at Broad and Market, which had been adopted as a meeting point and skating course for the city's misfit youth on wheels. Citing a threat to public safety and the endangerment of historical grounds, Philadelphia mayor Wilson Goode ruled the surrounding plaza off-limits, following the similar policies of city's around the country– criminalizing one of the few hands-off activities available to bored young people. The response was quick and memorable when hundreds of teenagers turned up on the steps of City Hall the following morning, skateboards in hand to protest the new legislation. As the decade closed, it was clear there was no shortage of bored, and often angry young people in and around Philadelphia. That many of these kids-more than a few I've since learned were among those fed- up skaters who stormed city hall-would turn to punk for a release or something to do hardly comes as a surprise.

While a great majority of punk shows were housed in various clubs in the city, the warehouses of West Philadelphia were already seasoned party and show hosts. Another outlet for punk at this time came in the form of WKDU, the city's oldest, student run, non-commercial radio stations owned by Drexel University. Although the station boasted a free-form format, punk's representation was strong on WKDU airwaves even at a time when punk on the radio was still an anomaly.

In 1991, the station sponsored a large all-ages concert at Drexel University hosting Washington DC's Fugazi along with Philly's own Random Children (members would later form Franklin and Fracture), in an effort to raise money and awareness of an Anti-Racist skinhead/punk organization.

A few years later, Riot Grrrl and later Queer Core would hit Philly as it had other cities, further distancing underground punk from the commercial haunts of center city and the mainstream's growing definition of 'punk.' In late 1993, a small group of punks, tired of the rockstar attitudes, commercialism, greed and violence of the dominant punk/HC scene, began sharing their ideas of an alternative with affordably priced matinees and evening concerts in the basement of the Calvary Church at 48th and Baltimore Avenue in West Philadelphia. The group called itself The Cabbage Collective, and was the first to lay down the terms of what would in a few short years become the expected modus operandi of underground punk in the city. Low door prices, all ages admissions policies and attempts at collective decision making characterized this new group of show organizers. In sharp contrast to the aggressive, mosh-oriented shows at most clubs and concert venues in center city, a typical Cabbage Collective show might involve kids sitting on the floor of a church basement

while bands discussed the ideas behind their songs, with performers and crowd both sharing donation-priced vegan food.

The Cabbage Collective (including Policy of 3/ 400 Years Bassist Bull Gervasi) was instrumental in laying the groundwork for autonomous show organizing in Philadelphia. Within the year, others became eagerly involved: Mafouka! Queercore (the production name of Mon Ovathasarn, editor of Superstar / Sweetness and Light / Mafouka! queer fanzines, singer of F-80), Fur Salon Productions, Gurlz With Gunz (two highschool age female zine editors who began doing charity shows in Philadelphia) and Mike McKee, who (after organizing all-ages shows focusing on the young crop of straightedge punk bands from the immediate western suburbs) worked with Mafouka! to establish an all-ages alternative to the established, bar-and-club-centric riot Grrrl/Queercore scene).

Within a few short years, young people had established a significant new set of Philly's music scene outside the walls of Pennsylvania's restrictive Blue Laws (state licensing detailing age- restrictions at clubs and music events). Newspaper articles covering the growth of this alternative seemed stunned that young people, let alone punks, might be capable of responsibly creating an artistic and nurturing space for themselves. On the rare occasions this new "DIY" (as it was now being called) scene mixed with the commercial venues and production companies of the city (the sporadically cooperative Black Hole production company, the hardcore-centric Revival and the notoriously unsupportive Trocadero—known for its brutal, often unfair security staff and high door prices), the mood was confrontational. Responding to a newspaper article including criticisms from under-21 punks (notably a young Mike McKee and Violent Society vocalist Pat Leck), Trocadero owner Dave Simons blasted, "The job of the bouncers is really not to make friends. Also, $2 for a cup of water is not unreasonable. Also, before the Trocadero, people were in the dark to good music. Doing all ages [shows] is a hassle and usually more trouble than its worth." When the Trocadero invited Mafouka!'s Ovathasarn to host a "DIY" night at its club, most in attendance viewed the club suspiciously and showed little respect to the space or its infamously brutal bouncers. The 1994 event, billed with Witness Protection Program, Policy of 3, Stuntmen (featuring a young Andrew Martini) and The Way Outs (featuring McKee and future KTMWQ/ Rambo bassist Beau Brendley), was riddled with trouble for club, and came close to being shut down early more than once. One band even attempted to vandalize the club from the stage with a messy combination of baby oil, manure, moth balls and eggs. When audience members stomped on the mothballs, the toxic fumes released got so intense that the club had to be evacuated before the remaining bands could perform. Finally, it was a level-headed Bull Gervasi whose well-written essay over the sound system would calm the rowdy audience while still declaring a firm, anti-commercial club stance. By the end of the night, the police had been called and McKee and Brendley had won the dubious title of "banned for life" from Trocadero security and staff.

In the winter of that year, several punks moved into a small, one-level warehouse sandwiched between Killtime and FakeHause. Working off their mutual love of the '70s sitcom Hogans Heroes (in constant rerun rotation on Philly's channel 57, immortalized by Dead Milkmen), the motley group of punkers christened their new home Stalag 13 and celebrated their housewarming with a punk show on February 11, 1994 with The Applicators, Double Penetration, Dis Sucks and The Abreacts. As others, outside the house, began taking a more active role in the booking of shows, Stalag 13 became a regular place to check out shows. When former WKDU DJ Mikey Brosnan moved into Stalag 13 during the warehouse's first year, the young punk instituted a strict anti-hard-drug policy in an attempt to slough off the space's reputation as a junkie shooting gallery. This act, might be argued, represented the first effort in the transformation of the run- down warehouse, a struggle including fights on the dancefloor, litter in the neighborhood, skinhead and thug violence, tangles with the police and university jocks and plenty else. Despite the rough start, Stalag 13 would quickly become a staple in the Philly scene and in the tour schedules of countless traveling bands. The venue's rise to notoriety was documented in indie filmmaker Jason Shevchuk's film Ghetto Venue, which won awards in Philadelphia City Paper's Independent Film Contest in 1998. Anyone from Philadelphia probably knows the rest of that particular story, as would most punk/HC/grind/ emo/indie bands who toured the east coast from 1994-1998. In a four-year period, the venue and the family of punks associated with it would establish themselves as one of the major forces of the national DIY punk scene.

The aim of this article is to examine the history of the last 3 years of Philadelphia punk and how various events and conditions led us to where we are today; to chronicle the often tumultuous ebb-and-flow relationship of the city's activist community with the underground music scene; and to share one person's view of how finally, after a rich and exciting history, Philadelphia punk has reached a crossroads with the opportunity of strongly fusing the two dominant cores of its culture—music and politics—in a truly inclusive, progressive form.

DEFINING A COMMUNITY: IN COMMON GROUND AND IN DIVIDE

In the Spring of 2000, Philadelphia punk felt for me as though it was just beginning to wake up from a manageable, but persistent weight since the dissolution of the city's more 'established' bands and independent venues. The influential, albeit illegal warehouse venue Stalag 13, was shut down by the city's department of licenses and inspections in the summer of 1999 wrapping things up with a sold-out show featuring His Hero is Gone, Spain's E-150, Kill the Man Who Questions and NY's Murdock.' The lack of a consistent, all-ages, underground venue dropped the foundation out from under a seemingly unstoppable scene. Attempts were made to establish a licensed venue when former Stalag 13 ringleaders Andrew Martini (Stuntmen, Dis

Sucks, Kill The Man Who Questions, Limpwrist) and Tony Pointless (Rambo) joined with local DIY show promoter Sean Agnew to collaborate with a local university. The trio's efforts made for an interesting story, and good copy in the press too—articles about the struggle for a new venue appeared in the pages of the Philadelphia City Paper, The Philadelphia Weekly, Punk Planet and numerous campus and regional newspapers. Ultimately, the efforts of the post-Stalag pairing secured a location, but often left the mood at shows flat. Many of the people who once turned out in droves to support bands and hang out at Stalag 13 were now scarce, often uninterested in the emo and indie slant of the new venue's common bills, or unenthused about the alcohol-free policy of the new venue, or its perceived reduction in autonomy.

One of the city's oldest band's, Franklin, had broken up. Many in the scene had literally grown up around the band (it's members had previously constituted the punk band Random Children), watching it grow from a DC-influenced punk band into an accomplished fusion of indie punk and dancehall dub reggae without missing a step of power and passion. The band's 'last show' held at Agnew, Martini and Pointless' new venue for many, no doubt, marked the end of an era. After a sensational 3-year lifespan characterized by rumor, confrontational performances and, sadly, violence, the tongue-in-cheek straightedge hardcore band I Hate You disbanded after a chaotic show in upstate New York.

Widely recognized groups such as Ink and Dagger, Turmoil and Kid Dynamite had recently dissolved and the city experienced a great loss with the unfortunate death of Sean McCabe—scene provocateur and singer of Crud is a Cult, Mandela Strike Force and Ink and Dagger. The news of McCabe's death was felt bitterly by those who were close to the 25-year old punk, and those who had been inspired by the work of his many bands.

THE GREAT CLEARING OFF

As much as McCabe's death was premature and accidental, the sense of loss it incurred left many within the scene feeling like a chapter of their time in punk had come to a close. McCabe's departure would later be commemorated in song by Philly bands like AMFM and by a friend's record label which would adopt the name of one of McCabe's fanzines (Dead By 23).

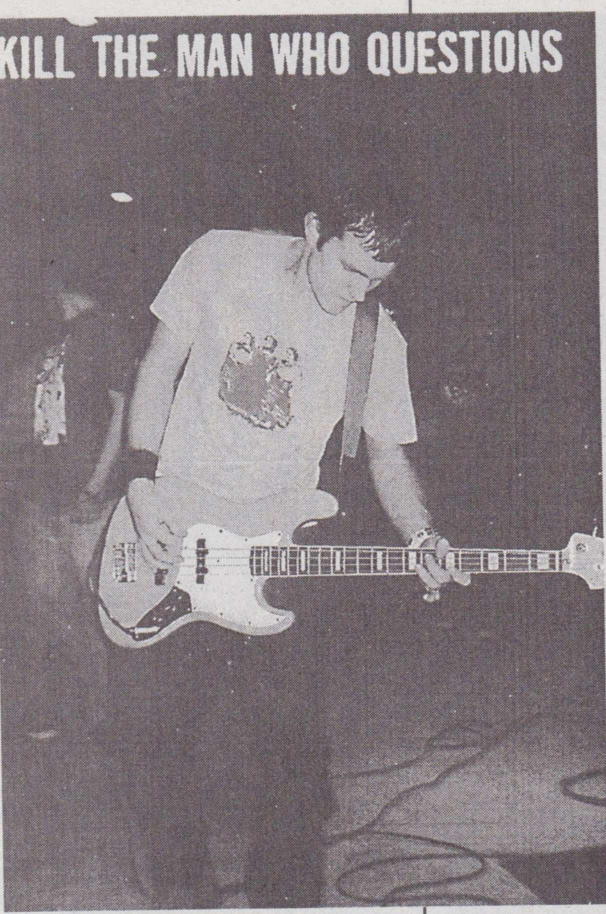
Meanwhile, as the months drifted on, the post-Stalag pairing of Agnew, Martini and Pointless was becoming strained. While Martini and Pointless felt increasingly left out of behind-the-scenes dealings, Agnew had started to feel like he was left with the brunt of the work. With Martini touring consistently with his band, Kill the Man Who Questions, and Pointless becoming more involved with a band of his own, coordinating schedules and information to maintain the three-person model was becoming more arduous than any of the three had planned. Agnew soon split from his ex-Stalag partners, operating as R5 Productions and booking some of the biggest bands in the emo, indie and punk-crossover circuit. Bands such as Bis, At The Drive-In, Godspeed You Black Emperor, Jimmy Eat World and Alkaline Trio—national acts hosted by large rock clubs in other major cities—were now routinely playing DIY shows in Philadelphia. While this set a powerful example for the efficiency and potential of the DIY ethic in an increasingly music-as-business environment, high headliner guarantees and a high volume of demand, left Agnew unable to accommodate many of the local punk bands outside of his immediate circle of friends and associates.

Bands like The Sound of Failure, Fire Down Below, James Love Jackson, Myles of Destruction, Captain Crash, Kids United, Numbers are Neutral and At Bay, meanwhile, had been raging an intense, if not as publicized, assault in the city's basements and warehouses throughout the tail end of Stalag 13 and this period as well. As Stalag 13 had rocketed into a position as one of the east coast's most prominent venues, it—like Agnew's R5 Productions—found itself booked up with a myriad of touring acts, while unable to host all of the worthwhile bands formed just miles away. The Sound Of Failure guitarist Joe Gough remembers, "We couldn't get a show there to save our lives. Not being really 'in' with anybody, it was harder to make that happen. So the basement scene was really supportive and had created a network." Basements in houses like Robot House (run principally by BJ, guitarist of Fire Down Below), Garlic House (home to members of Great Clearing Off), Ellsworth Kings (a south Philly house, home to Don Black of James Love Jackson) and the FunRama formed a wide basis for both touring and local bands.

Bob Meadows, frontman for the metallic hardcore outfit A Life Once Lost, over the course of the last 2 years established a strong show production force often hosting moshable concerts at the Killtime warehouse or Agnew's various venues.

From the basements, another shade of Philly punk was given some shape with the release of Philadelphia Wild Things, a CD compilation put together by John Foy, a contributor and collaborator in the Lost Film Festival and guitarist in The Great Clearing Off. The CD included songs from Sound of Failure, Mother Courage, Eulogy, At Bay, Great Clearing Off and others. Foy's ties with the local activist scene made for some much needed bridge building, bringing the worlds of West Philly politics and punk a little closer together. Meanwhile, the political activist scene in the city had swelled to enormous proportions. Massive demonstrations in Washington DC and Philadelphia had left dozens of new activists transplanted to Philadelphia - some awaiting trial, some stranded with no way home, some who just decided to stay. On a national scale, a large percentage of punk seemed content to break down into political ambiguity and indifference, while fashion and ritual took a front seat. In many ways, however, the political environment of the late '90s and especially under the new President non-elect George W. Bush was more hostile and desperate than some of the bleakest Reagan days, which previous punks had organized against so vehemently.

One of the many groups based out of Philadelphia in need of financial support was a grassroots non-profit, just beginning to go legitimate called Books Through Bars, which provided free, educational reading material to prisoners. Inspired by the work of a similar group from DC (The DC Area Books To Prisoners Project), members of two Philly bands, eager to reinvigorate their side of the punk scene, decided to organize a benefit event for Books Through Bars. Although Antiproduct - who had just relocated to Philadelphia from Binghamton, NY–and Kill The Man Who Questions were viewed as two of the city's 'biggest' bands, neither had played a show in Philly in months–the latter, in fact hadn't played a weekend home date in nearly two years. On March 31st, the two bands played a $2 Saturday matinee show, providing live music to the city's first "Punk Rock Flea Market," hosted at The Rotunda–the newer, more intimate venue Agnew's R5 Productions had landed through the local University of Pennsylvania. The Punk Rock Flea Market hosted countless shops, distros, vendors and kids peddling their new and used records, books, bike courier bags, zines and retired studded vests.



The event raised more than $1,800 for Books Through Bars and collected about 14 mailcrates full of donated books. The event, which stretched through a long day of great weather, and its casual, non-band focus allowed for some perhaps long overdue mingling of different crowds. When McKee delivered the event's earnings, the Books Through Bars representative was clearly shocked. The group had been expecting a dollar amount in the low hundreds. The fact that the benefit was such a large financial success, for some was the final illumination of a long hypothesized, albeit cliche equation: Philly's various subsets and cliques, working and operating together, meant some very serious business.

A combination of elements, including the growing intensity of the basement show scene, the partnering of new show organizers, the release of Wild Things and the strong community vibe of the Punk Rock Flea Market could be viewed as a shift towards a convergence of various sides to the collective punk coin in Philadelphia.

HISTORY IS WHAT'S HAPPENING

As the millennium came to a much commercially lauded turnover, Philadelphia punk was going about its business as it had before the ball dropped at Times Square. In place of the Stalag-era bands, new bands have since formed and lit up the Western neighborhoods of the city including Ones & Zeros, Aim of Conrad, R5, Knives Out, Excelsior, Kids United, Captain Crash, Myles of Destruction, Fire Down Below, Neil Perry and The Third Wheel–consisting of Jon Foy from The Great Clearing Off and Natalie from the short-lived suburban band Mother Courage.

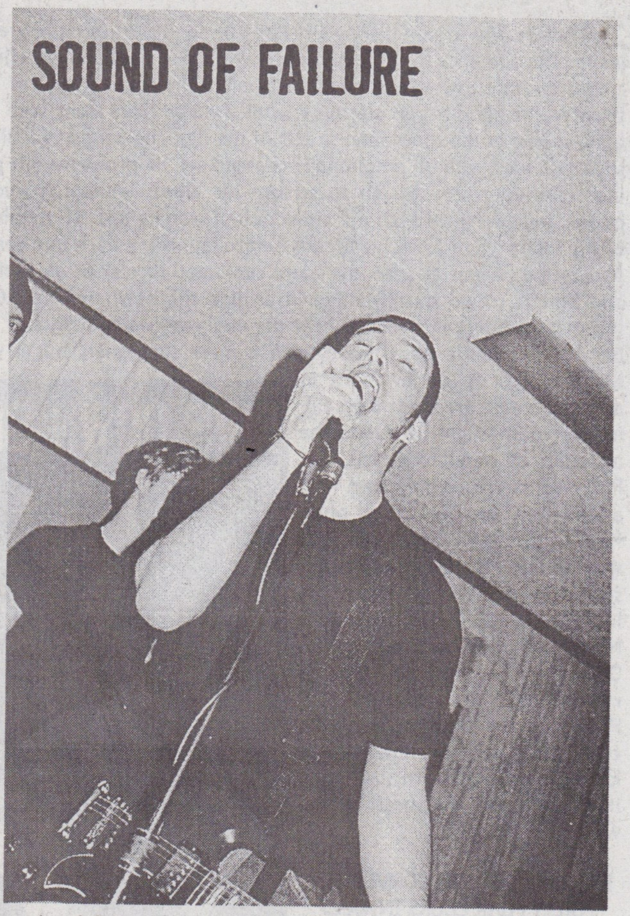
While streetpunk is alive and well in the city of brotherly love, it is largely disconnected from the majority of people who make up its past. Many older punks feel the genre has since settled in a ghostly position rather removed from the politics to which it pays lip service. Frontman Greg Boil was one of the first to voice his feelings of exclusion as Stalag 13 re-directed its efforts towards less street punk-styled shows. The band's recent gigs have been in center city at commercial venues, largely disconnected from the 'veterans' of Stalag's punk heyday (characterized in part by The Boils, Violent Society and Dis Sucks). The separation highlights an unfortunate side effect of the West Philly set's attempt to deal with violence and alchohol-problems at shows and its crossover with an unreceptive activist scene. As much the West Philly set has changed and adapted, it hasn't managed to do so without alienating some former allies. Meanwhile, another set of punk rockers in Philadelphia-many in their teens and early 20s, continue to organize popularly attended shows still bringing out the 'hawks and spikes with bands such as Blind Society, Minor Disturbance, the Virus and Discarded Youth. Back on the hardcore side of the spectrum, strange things have been rumbling. Philadelphia has for some time had a tradition of infusing its punk with shtick–think the portfolio of Dead Milkmen, the hyperbole of I Hate You, the corpsepaint of Ink and Dagger, the revolutionary rhetoric of Mandela Strike Force. As an old-school, "thrash" hardcore revival swept the country, Philadelphia answered in typical Philadelphia style. The band: Rambo–featuring former and current members of Reagan Squad, Kill The Man Who Questions, Virginia Black Lung and Good Clean Fun. The result: Uniformed band members storm the stage from paper-mache helicopters, makeshift tanks roll through boiling moshing crowds and a costumed cast of riot cops, vivisectors, vikings and "punx" churn the floors of independent venues into high-energy, theatric circlepits. Former Stalag 13 resident and promoter Tony Pointless fronts the band, singing only about topics he can relate to personally–a policy formerly preached by Crud/Mandela Strike Force/Ink and Dagger frontman Sean McCabe. While some have criticized the band for putting more weight in gimmicks and outlandish stage shows than substance, Rambo has injected an element of fun and abandon at a time when aggressive, political punk was for sore want of representation in the city. Approaching performances as half-frontman, half-comedian, Pointless packages hardcore political diatribes in a fun and accessible delivery that has even the most non-politically minded mosh-hogs pointing out the subtle differences between anarcho-syndicalism and primitivist theory. A full-length on San Francisco's x625x Records, complete with over-the-top packaging simultaneously mocking and the fetishizing hardcore scene documents the band's writing to date, and helps secure Philly's place on the punk map.Longtime hardcore show promoter and straightedge daredevil Robby Redcheeks formed a band of his own to help fuel the growing resurgence of traditional hardcore in Philadelphia. The band, Damage, compiled members of The Boils and I Hate You and soon recorded a demo and a 7" EP. Occasional special-event reunion shows have maintained the band's intimate following. Further documenting Damage, is Redcheek's new record label, Dead By 23–named after one of Sean McCabe's fanzines. The new label is already at work on a slew of releases, most in the sxe hardcore vein, the first of which is a 7" EP from Philadelphia's Go Time. Two other punk veterans-Brian Sokel (formerly of Franklin) and Mike Parsell (formerly of Frail, Ink and Dagger)-formed the pop group AMFM, releasing records on the Polyvinyl label, collaborating, with other Philly indies from groups like The Science Of and Terry Yerves (Meatlocker Studios, Ink and Dagger), and maintaining a close, intimate punk attitude while abandoning most aesthetic standards in their songwriting.Hailing from the same formerly louder and more distorted crowd is Atom Goren of

Atom & His Package, who has released records (on Bloodlink and Hopeless Records) and toured extensively throughout this entire three-year period.

Ed Walters Records, formed in the late '90s by Stalag 13 promoter cum bike messenger Mike Dailey has seen a flurry of activity working on numerous projects, including a split 7" between NY's Murdock and the midwest's Sutek Conspiracy, and a series of split 7"s celebrating the punk mode-of-transportation-of choice, the bike, as well as those who draw their livelihoods and happiness from the two-wheeled machine. WKDU DJ Mike Quinn (who had played in bands and organized shows throughout Stalag's tour of duty) formed a record label called No Quarter, re-releasing rare and out of print material from the influential stoner rock group Earth in the fall of 2001. KTMWQ members Andrew Martini and McKee have started a record label and plan to release a CD compiling the band's compilation and vinyl-only tracks in early 2002. Great Clearing Off's debut 7" and a Sound of Failure full-length are also in the works. Part of the aim of this new label is to encourage and document the unique and sincere music of Philadelphia's all-ages punk community.

Perhaps no two bands represent the current feeling of Philly punk like The Great Clearing Off and The Sound of Failure, who over the past year have possibly defined themselves as two of the area's most intense bands. The fact that both bands are still together, playing out and working towards releasing their music is a commendable feat in and of itself in Philadelphia, where many bands remain underground without ever documenting their work. The Sound of Failure has toured the east coast on a full-length CD released by the locally run Breathmint Records. The band's debut 7" is now available courtesy of the newly formed When Humans Attack Label (also responsible for the one-sided LP from the chaotic rockers An Albatross). The band's live shows usually involve a sweeping tsunami of Gough's signature guitar sound and some personal in-between-song disclosures from the impressively sincere band. Former Fire Down Below bassist Colin recently replaced S.O.F.'s previous bass player. Guitarist/vocalist Joe Gough recently joined Kill The Man Who Questions as a second guitar player, filling the long vacant spot left by current *Maximum Rocknroll* co-ordinator Mike Thorn. The Great Clearing Off, like The Sound of Failure, now delivers impressive, often highly emotional live shows which have become a point of gathering for many who feel a special connection to the new sub-scene of local, mutually supportive bands. The band's self-released CD would be impressive for its packaging alone. The lyrics, explanations and passionate music inside, however, demand top billing.

Kill the Man Who Questions is perhaps one of the oldest and more established bands from the area which is still active, with three



7"s and a full-length CD/LP to its credit. The band has toured the United States and Europe, releasing records through Philadelphia's Bloodlink label and Coalition Records from Holland. Despite this out-of-the-area activity, the band has maintained a strong focus on Philadelphia. In May of this year, one of Kill the Man Who Questions' two vocalists, Niki Long, left the band to concentrate on other projects. Despite rumors of Long being replaced by former/current members of Fire Down Below or Spitboy, the band has decided to continue with just one singer. Long has since started a new band with some roommates and members of Antiproduct. Although Antiproduct has not played a show since the Punk Rock Flea Market, frontwoman Taina DelValle has established a strong reputation through her hip hop-flavored poetry and spoken word performances. DelValle also has been busy with a division of a grassroots, non profit group she helped to form called The Self Education Foundation which hopes to share information, resources and guidance for alternative schooling and personal empowerment.

Ex-Kid Dynamite vocalist/indie filmmaker (Ghetto Venue) Jay Shevchuk has formed a band with Philadelphia Daily News reporter and former Scenester / Deal With It Fanzine editor Dan Gross and former Walleye/Railhead drummer and Clay Creek Studio engineer Nick Rotundo called None More Black. Taking a more rock-oriented approach than Shevchuk's previous band, None More Black played its first show in the late summer of 2001 with The Deadly– new band featuring Jeremy Gewertz of Kill The Man Who Questions /Rambo and ex-members of Turmoil.

At the end of the summer of 2001, Philadelphia received an unexpected update on its scene when Rambo frontman Tony Pointless organized an all-day show showcasing some of the most widely recognized hardcore and punk bands of the day, along with a handful of locals. While crowds were excited over headliners like Tragedy and From Ashes Rise, the fervor with which local bands like Sound of Failure, Great Clearing Off and Witch Hunt (a new, female-fronted band playing its first show) were supported truly fueled the passion of the day.

Before The Great Clearing Off had played, frontman Josh Gregal invited the audience to come and circle in close to the band, as a thick crowd swarmed what had been designated "the small stage" for the show. As the band began playing, friends shouted lyrics along with the band in one of the more intense sets of the day. The Sound of Failure soon followed with an emotionally charged set. PA problems left guitarist/frontman Joe Gough to scream his words without a microphone, staggering through the crowd, often leaning against members of the audience to catch his breath before launching back into songs. And as the PA was cleared, the band continued to play as an excited and kinetic crowd quickly filled in around the newly re-configured five-piece, leaning in closer to hear the explanations and lyrics of the band. The attitude might have been a mere suggestion, but it was being picked up on by many in attendance: the great numbers filling the room might be due to the inclusion of headlining acts, but Philly punks valued their own with an intensity out-of-towners often find surprisingly. After one such show where Philadelphia's Rambo stole the show from headliners like The Locust and What Happens Next, even indie label owner Tim Owens of Jade Tree Records remarked, "I've suspected that Philly has the best scene in the country for a while now. Now I know it's true, and I'm suspecting it might have the best in the world."

PREACHING TO THE CONVERTED?: PHILLY PUNK LOOKS INWARD

Owens' glowing review underlined the rebirth of a significant scene in Philadelphia, but it also cast a shadow on some elements that hadn't seemed to make the transition. If this was to be "the best scene in the country," than for whom did that status apply? Philadelphia, as much as any other American punk scene, still faces a largely white, male and middle-class demographic. While the effort to diversify and outreach continues, a run of history and condition clearly highlights the challenge ahead.

Although several of Philly's most prominent bands historically have featured punks of color (YDI, McRad, Scab Caddillac, Random Children, Franklin, No.2 Nippy, Dead Alive, Dis Sucks, just to name a few), and punks of working class backgrounds (Pagan Babies, Rambo, Punishment), the majority of the scene is hued a predictable white and hailing from middle-class backgrounds. With steady venues such as the 4040 and Rotunda, Agnew has tried collaborating with other promoters to bring hip hop acts such as Arsonists, High & Mighty, Dalek, Prince Paul and Big Daddy Kane to Philly through the DIY circuit. This summer, the hip hop activist group AWOL co-hosted a Fourth of July dis-celebration of police brutality and racist incarceration at West Philadelphia's Clark Park, bringing together the always powerful, female-fronted hip hop group Luminous Flux, DelValle's spoken word and punk acts like the Insubordinates and Kill The Man Who Questions together for an outdoor afternoon of music and politics. This Spring, Fults will again help organize a Women's Music Festival in North Philadelphia's Temple University. While last year included Luminous Flux and various spoken word performers (many people of color), 2001's fest will continue attempts at a more diverse notion of inclusion. In a 3 year period since the closure of Stalag 13, a scarce amount of women had fronted or formed bands, even though women accounted for a large portion of the scene and played just as crucial a role behind-the-scenes. And although the numbers might have looked slightly more equitable on Agnew's more indie-centric bills, few punks wanted to compromise their music for the apolitical, albeit more gender-balanced, indie rock jetset. Mother Courage, Kiss Kiss Kill, Cynthia G. Mason, Unavailable, Antiproduct, Kill the Man Who Questions, Fire Down Below, Meridien, Captain Crash and Myles of Destruction all feature(d) female members—a none-too-shabby list considering the track record of punk scenes across the country. Still, of the most consistently playing bands, the boys made up the lion's share. Some felt this was because the bands making waves in recent months were made up of the people who had prioritized music—over activism, or other, visual art—throughout the last year or more. While this was true, others argued, not surprisingly, that this was indicative of the male-dominated atmosphere of the larger punk scene in general. The excessive moshing and macho vibes of shows with thrash-revival and straightedge groups such as Tear It Up, I Hate You, Turmoil and Go Time, left many people wondering just what the fuck was going on. If 25 years into a movement, punk hadn't ensured the safety and availability to personal space for everyone in attendance, than, some argue, something had gone sour.

A period of intense violence towards the end of Stalag 13's time resulted in a blacklist policy where coalitions of show organizers would bar entry to a number of agreed upon "troublemakers" who violated a 3-strikes mandate from the 'big' promoters: Agnew, Redcheeks, Pointless. On the dancefloor, this motion away from violence took a subtle form of protest as well. Many bands and punks were seeking an alternative to out-and-out moshing. Packs of Philly punks would routinely dive into overly machismo moshpits with the intent of sabotaging the "harder-than-you" attitude, often flailing moronically, or emulating "windmills" or "picking up change" dances in a cartoonesque, exaggerated manner, much to the delight of their friends and those who didn't wish to be clobbered while watching a band.

West Coast transplant and *Heartattack* columnist Kristi Fults, upon arriving in Philadelphia in 1998, wrote in one of her columns that she was surprised at how unfriendly the city's punk shows were to an outsider. Ultimately, according to Fults, those who don't wish to deal with being the landing pad for an errant stagediver, will eventually find themselves reconsidering their role and involvement in so macho a scene.

Two years since then, overt violence at shows had been virtually wiped out. Fights at the underground Philadelphia punk shows were virtually non-existent. Pointless' Rambo proved to be the testing ground. Even before Rambo had begun playing, the band and its friends knew that the band's style of aggressive, breakdown-rich hardcore would be a magnet for hard-minded dancers. It was Pointless' belief that by injecting humor, and maintaining a non-anonymous atmosphere where people were forced to learn each others names or faces, violence would be averted. In the case of Rambo, he was right. The band routinely draws crowds equal parts radical infoshop staffers and X'd up hardcore youth 'crewers, with nary a scuffle. Still, the physical free-for-all of their shows, and shows of similar, aggressive-sounding bands leave many would-be participants feeling relegated to the sidelines.

Kill The Man Who Questions, meanwhile, has never had to deal

with fights at its shows. The more institutionalized violence of dancefloor politics, however, has proven more challenging to dismantle. Time spent in the riot Grrrl and QueerCore scene, along with the history of co-ed membership has helped put some weight behind the band's "more dance, less mosh" suggestions. At the larger shows, however, the success of this more inclusive attitude has been subject to fluctuation. Ultimately, while bands are expected to accept responsibility, the battle for space at shows is something most directly affected by those in attendance. Probably more influential than bands or organizers are the groups of punks and activists who congregate, dance and interact on the dancefloor with huddles, horseplay and attempts to redefine the notions of dance, space and inclusiveness.

The deterrent effect on some people—particularly women—of moshing and boy-majority shows also helped define bands like The Great Clearing Off, Rambo (whose shows while physical offer more on the dancefloor than the standard stomp and kick), Sound of Failure, At Bay and Kill The Man Who Questions as part of a new community where people's safety and comfort might take precedent over the ritual and release of standard "punk norms."

BACK TO THE BASEMENTS: Value In Intimacy

"In search of liberty
In search of independence
We're sorry we took it over
Like you ever wanted to?
My diagnosis? Philadelphia psychosis."
—*Ink and Dagger, "Philapsychosis" 1998.*

As of September 1, 2001, Agnew withdrew from his lease with the University-affiliated Rotunda. He had received criticism for some time for his collaboration with the University—no saint in the field of animal testing, gentrification or labor relations—but had planned to ride out the arrangement so long as it provided him and the city an independent, large-size venue. Increased pressure from the University to share control over the Rotunda's operations continued to push Agnew away, until he finally decided to walk. Although Agnew announced plans almost immediately to begin work on a new, completely independent, fully licensed and completely all-ages club (a first for Philadelphia), this project would take months to come into form, as Agnew projected a January or February 2002 opening. Fliers for an upcoming Books Through Bars benefit show quickly marked the demise of the Rotunda with the headline, "Back To The Basement." The relationship between the local punk scene and Books Through Bars is still maintained to this day. In June of 2001, a series of concerts benefiting the group was initiated (the series stretched into December 2001), with local punk bands contributing by playing for free, raising awareness of the group and lending live recordings of these performances towards a compilation record also benefiting the organization. Each show in the series has attempted to raise awareness of various aspects of the prison industrial complex and the American "justice" system in general, while simultaneously challenging interested punkers to politicize their own scene. Fliers, posters and banners for the series have tried to set an immediate and direct tone offering phrases such as "№1 Growth Industry," "Live The Life," "Whose America?" and "Re-Humanize." To date The Sound of Failure, Kill The Man Who Questions, The Great Clearing Off, Stinking Lizaveta, The Assistant, Affirmative Action Jackson, Taina DelValle, AMFM, Atom & His Package and Excelsior have all participated in the series, along with out of towners such as This Machine Kills (Goleta, CA), Elizabeth Elmore (Chicago, IL), Zegota (N.Carolina), Ted Leo (nj/dc), Books Lie (NYC), Hot Cross (NYC), Del Cielo (Washington DC) and Mark Andersen of Positive Force.

With the closure of The Rotunda, the majority of the underground punk/hardcore shows in the city have been adopted by FunRama, a basement space a few blocks away, which has been hosting shows for roughly two years. Other shows have since been hosted at The Killtime warehouse and the First Unitarian Church, one of the few venues in center city to host punk events. The loss of The Rotunda has effected Philadelphia punk in a very different way than the forced closure of Stalag 13 in 1999, this time feeling more like a case of renovation rather than retreat. The strong structure of show promoters, DIY organizers and bands has shifted comfortably to new venues. Once again, the focus has returned, as the Books Through Bars flier had jokingly suggested 'to the basements'. This, rather than a fixation on accommodating headliners ("assholes from out of town" sic. anonymous Philly punk), affords Philadelphia's punk scene the freedom of pursing the notion of community more freely. In an increasingly "connected" world, this unique and regionalist quality is perhaps of upmost importance. Underground punk in Philadelphia is not "a click away," or a stepping stone to bigger, commercial status, but rather a reflection of the art, activism, efforts and passion of the people seen on the streets everyday.

This is not a story that ends with a finish line. As 2001 winds down, Philadelphia punk has reached a crossroads, possessing a fresh and very real awareness of the obstacles it has overcome and those which it still has yet to effectively face. We are proud of our community, and as some punk's graffiti to a Trocadero speaker in 1992 boldly declared: "Our Spirit Will Endure." No Trend... No Compromise.
Mike McKee October 2001

The following are bands/artists currently active in underground Philadelphia music: Ones & Zeros, Kill The Man Who Questions, Sound of Failure, Great Clearing Off, Fire Down Below, Luminous Flux, Terminal Crash, Atom & His Package, AMFM, The Third Wheel, Kiss Kiss Kill, Beware the Blunted Needle, Rambo, The Boils, Affirmative Action, Jackson, Proverbs of the Illest, Riverbottom Nightmare Band, Cynthia G. Mason ,DJ Major Taylor (Ralph Darden, Franklin), Need New Body, Lefty's Deceiver, Matt Pond PA, Aspera , Punishment, Dysrythmia, Technician, Kettle, Go Time, Antiproduct, Go! For the Throat, The Deadly, None More Black, Kettle Rebellion, Captain Crash, Myles of Destruction, Kids United, James Love Jackson,Falkor
...there are plenty more. For help contacting or learning more about any of these, feel free to get in touch. (Killthemail@yahoo.com) Better yet, come visit.

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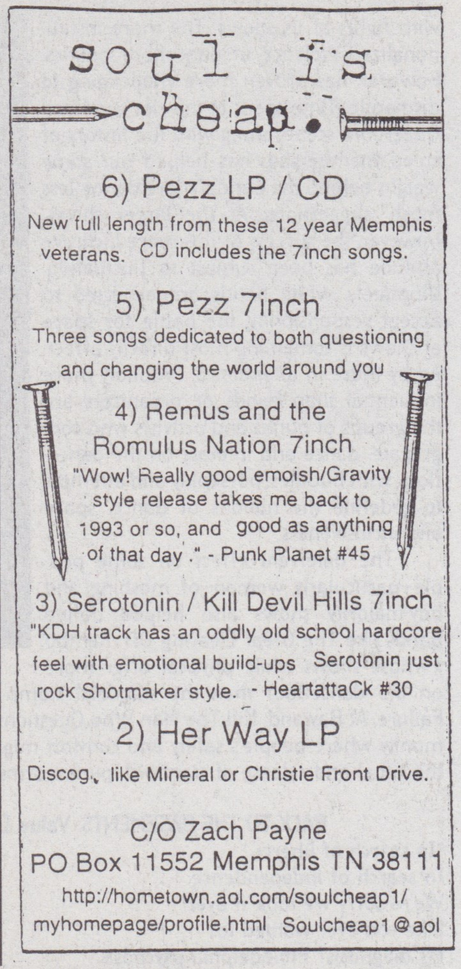
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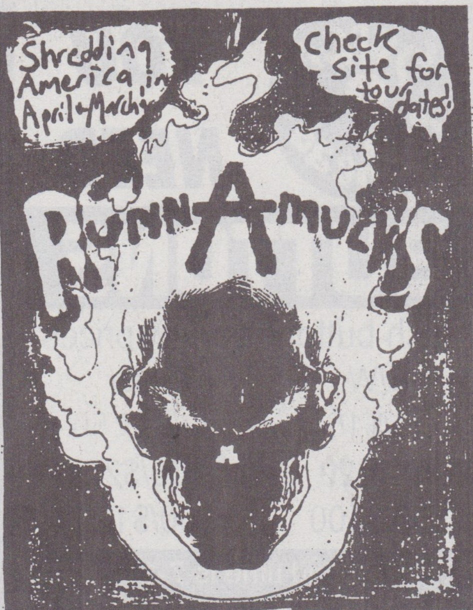

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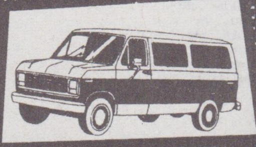

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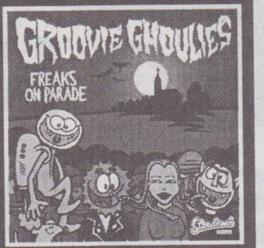

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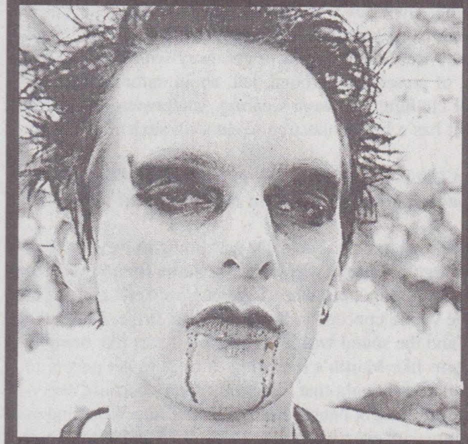
Vaseline is an underground queer core event that takes place in Toronto. Will Munro, a hardcore kid and artist, is the mastermind behind the event. The event has been running on a monthly basis for the last two years and has developed quite the reputation with stories about mud wrestling, dildo bobbing, and roller derbies. I had a chance to speak with Will about his roots in the hardcore scene, his development as an artist, and the development of one of the most important underground alternative queer events that has happened to Toronto: Vaseline. Interview by Stephe Perry.



...Vaseline was proof enough that he was a sodomite...

MRR: Tell us about your background with regards to the Vaseline event. Where did you start? What did you do before Vaseline?

Will: Well I grew up a suburban kid, so I always had a need to meet people, network with people, and do things. I was always into punk and skating as a kid. I started coming downtown a lot to go to hardcore shows, and was really involved in the hardcore scene for a long time. When I moved downtown, I moved to go to art school, so I have always had a strong connection to the art community in Toronto, being an artist making work and meeting other people who are making work. So those are kind of my communities—the arts, music, punk, and queer community are sort of a whole bunch of different communities that I participate in and that I try and bring together, because they don't always come together. They sort of overlap sometimes.

MRR: I knew you from the hardcore scene initially, and then I saw this exhibition that you did when you were in art school. It involved your underwear art, and Michael Coren, a Born Again Christian with the *Toronto Sun*, panned the exhibit, but everyone else seemed to love it. Then slowly you started getting some recognition for your underwear art. *Vice* magazine wrote you up in the "Tidbits" section—they had a picture of the "Anarchy" underwear. Do people know you for your underwear art or Vaseline?

Will: People who have been around know me for both things. I was making a lot of artwork for about two or three years, and publicly showing it probably two or three years before I started doing Vaseline, so I would say that a fair amount of people know me for my art, but because there has been a lot of media about Vaseline they probably just see me as some club promoter. It's hard to say. But I want to say that it was really funny when Michael Coren slammed me because he had never even seen the show. He just got an invitation and was offended by the invitation because the invitation was on underwear, and he just went off on a tangent. He didn't even talk to me. On top of that, he published the article before the installation was even half done. He had obviously never seen the exhibit.

The thing in *Vice* Magazine was stolen from *Mix* Magazine, an artist-run culture magazine. It was a review of a show that I did at Who's Emma for Active Resistance, and it was supposed to be about queer youth and activism, young queer radicals, and the connection between being queer and wanting to do activism. So I did a review for *Mix* so that it would get around and it got around more. I guess *Vice* likes to steal things from other magazines.

MRR: What is the connection to male briefs? Where did this connection to underwear start? What sort of significance has underwear taken on?

Will: I first got interested in briefs when I was really young, because I liked other little boys. But the connection to why I make art with them is because when I was still in high school and living in the suburbs, I was madly in love with my best friend. He would leave me alone in his mom's apartment sometimes, and I would take his underwear and put them on, and I stole a couple of

pairs. At that point that was the only way I felt it was possible to get close to him. It was all very romantic, at first. The significance was boyness attraction to same sex, sexuality—in general—and body image. Now the significance is all over the map, but after researching the history of underwear, its history openly explains some of the roots of body shame, hygiene, gender, class, and sexuality.

MRR: Explain how underwear is connected to male body shame.

Will: When I did a lot of research about underwear, I found out that underwear was first made and worn and produced in the Victorian era, and the only reason why they created it was because they felt that their bodies were disgusting and dirty, and they didn't want their clothes—their wonderful fabulous garments—to touch them. The Victorian era is responsible for our ideas of our dysfunctional modern body image. The first purpose of underwear was to distance our bodies from what is on top of them and what we are wearing instead of wearing something to display our bodies. The idea suggests that underwear could be responsible, subconsciously, for the way we perceive our body image. Everyone's body image is different, but I think the overall culture sends out a pretty dysfunctional message about how our bodies are or how they should be. It was also a big class thing. It was a very upper class thing to wear underwear when it was first made because lower class people—paupers or poor people—didn't worry about their bodies dirtying their clothes because their clothes were mostly dirty. It was linked with class. It was an upper class privilege to have this body shame that I think over the years has been well distributed throughout every class. Body shame is a fairly all-encompassing thing.

I also think there is a connection to body image between gender and underwear. While girls have girls' underwear and boys have boys'. Historically, in places like Stonewall in New York, a lot of queers crossdressed for fear of reprisal from the police. Some people were obvious trans, but some people were obviously crossdressing for the fact that when cops came in, if you were dancing with someone of the same sex—one person is crossdressing and the other person isn't—you look like a straight couple, so it stops people from assuming that you are queer. It was a very popular thing to crossdress in a lot of underground queer bars in the 30s and 40s. Police would arrest people who crossdressed because it was illegal to wear the opposite sex's clothing. You would be jailed if you were wearing the opposite sex's underwear. If you were wearing your own sex's underwear you wouldn't be jailed because they would reason that you weren't actually transsexual. They kind of understood that they were doing it just to get away with being queer. And there was a lot of persecution around that, about enforcing gender through what kind of clothing you were wearing. Underwear being that base clothing, I think it has a big connection to do with sexism and body image.

MRR: You have some underwear on the back cover of the latest Limp Wrist EP. Can you tell us about the underwear and how the idea came about? I think you were talking about going to see them at a show and you had a whole suit planned…

Will: I always plan on going to see Limp Wrist, but it doesn't really materialize. I actually was going to New York to go to D.U.M.B.A., and they had played the week before. I couldn't go because I was working. Some friends of mine had gone and told me about it and I was all pissed off because I wanted to go, but when I got to New York a friend of mine, who is this film junkie, had filmed the whole concert on Super 8 sound stripe. It was the sound and the visuals of the whole concert, and the sound was like perfect—it was like being at the show—so I saw the show on film. It seems like Martin's really big thing is to get people to take their clothes off and dance hard and stuff so I thought that was really funny because everyone was jumping around in their underwear, so I thought people need to have Limp Wrist underwear. So I thought, especially in hardcore culture with everyone trying to be all fly and letting their pants hang down, I thought underwear is obviously a visible thing so I appropriated that Old English tough guy script and embroidered it into the waist band. You can't really tell on the 7," but it is all hand embroidered. I planned a couple of outfits. I wanted to make a more youth crew pair of underwear and have "LIMP WRIST XXX" right on the ass in Old English font and maybe a hoodie or something like that. I was thinking gloves, too, because there was that whole straight edge connection with wearing working gloves. I was thinking of making a little more gender fuck by making some lacy new wave gloves with sequined "X's" or something and kind of fucking with the testosterone of it all.

MRR: What is Vaseline?

Will: Vaseline is a petroleum product that has been on the market as long as there was one. People like Jean Genet used to carry a tube of it in the back pocket of his pants. When police found him and discovered it, they would throw him in jail. Vaseline was proof enough that he was a sodomite. Later on Lou Reed would hang out in his favorite NYC hotspots appropriately coined "Vaseline Bars." Sid Vicious would spike his hair up with it. I also found out that Vaseline, the trademark, was appropriated by a bunch of British queer indie/punkers who started an indie nite club which, under corporate pressure, changed it's name to Club V. The club has since deceased. Vaseline in Toronto is actually the second queer punk nightclub internationally.

MRR: Tell us more about Club V. When did it start?

Will: I don't know when it actually started. A couple of months after I started Vaseline, a friend of mine from New York was like, "Do you know about Club V in England?" I didn't know that there was another one. He was like, "Yeah, it's really cool. You should know about it." So he gave me this zine with Le Tigre on the cover. They were around for a long time. They were around for at least six or seven years, so they go back to the early or mid 90s. All I know about Club V is that I am on a queer punk chat with Sarit, one of the girls who started it, and that there was a collective of people—four or

five people—that put Club V together, that it started once a month and it moved to being a weekly thing, and that it was, at the time, the only alternative to mainstream gay club culture. Their focus was more on playing independent music, music by women, and music by people of color, because in the mainstream there was no room for any of that and consequently it was never played. Their focus was also the same mandate with live music—they always had a live band and DJs. The musical content was a little bit different, but very similar in its intentions. It lasted up until last year. Last year they had their last party.

MRR: So you didn't know about Club V?

Will: I had no idea. It is really funny—Sarit had emailed me once because she wanted to talk about what was going on with being sued by Vaseline because they had the same problems in England—they just changed their name right away, whereas we are going to play hardball with them and, "Oh yeah, we'll change the spelling and change one letter" and play the game that way, whereas they changed to Club V right away.

MRR: Can you tell us about the lawsuit?

Will: Unilever, which is the corporation that owns the trademark for the product Vaseline, sent us a legal letter threatening to sue us if we didn't stop using their trademark. They called up the club owners. There was a similar legal suit that happened with a small queer youth group that were putting on performances under the name Fruit Loops. They had the same problem with the people who owned the trademark which was Kellogg's. So I knew that there was a grey area in this thing; the corporation doesn't really have the power or the right to tell us not to use it because we are not infringing on their trademark. Their trademark is for petroleum jelly and we are a queer punk night, so they are totally different things. So they don't really have a legal case, but they do have a lot of money to fuck us over. So basically we play games with them and change the spelling here and there. Things that we know that they are not going to see, we just put "Vaseline" on it.

MRR: Is that like the Vasoween event?

Will: "Vasoween" was just because it was funny because it was Halloween and sometimes we do change for specific events, like when Vaginal "Creme" Davis was here, we called it Vageline for her, just as a joke, so it was kind of funny.

MRR: But Unilever (Vaseline) hasn't pursued this any further?

Will: A couple of months ago they saw a poster that had Vaseline spelled the same as their trademark and they freaked out again So I had to change my poster spelling and my handbill spelling so that they would fuck off. Basically they have a bunch of corporate lawyers that are sitting around and have nothing better to do then bother people like me because they get paid $80,000 a year so that no one infringes on their trademark. That's their one and only job, right, so it must be hard.

MRR: I have heard all kinds of stories about Vaseline. What can people expect at a Vaseline event?

Will: People can expect that Vaseline will be happening in a big dirty rock 'n' roll club named the el Mocombo. They can expect one of the most diverse crowds. Queer punkers, metal dykes and fags, bears, dominatrixes, drag kings, transsexual girls and boys, gay skinheads, straight rock 'n' rollers, glam rockers, hardcore kids, drag queens, and go-go dancers. You can expect underground movies or porn being projected on Super 8 or 16 mm film, lots of decorations, drag hosts, crazy club competitions, and live bands, a bunch of DJs and lots of hot shake action.

MRR: What was the purpose for Vaseline? How did Vaseline get its start?

Will: I started Vaseline out of desperation, to have somewhere to go other than mainstream gay clubs.

The majority in this and most cities play awful music. I wanted to start a club where all the marginal parts of the queer community could be celebrated. A place that would play music that also had a strong connection to queerness, other than disco. Rock 'n' roll and punk music have more queer content then any other musical genre. I also wanted a place where there was not segregation between boys and girls and everybody in between. A place where people could get dressed up, try new things, cruise, and dance all night.

MRR: There is an emphasis on DJs at your events. Where did this idea come from?

Will: Growing up in the punk scene, either you danced or you didn't dance. If you danced, you danced hard and if you didn't dance you were probably against dancing hard and you didn't do anything, and you basically tried to protect your ass from getting clobbered by people who were dancing hard. I was never really exposed to any fun dancing, necessarily. But I have always been involved in a lot of different music scenes and cultures in this city. I went to a lot of underground house parties and old school disco parties and house parties people threw in their houses with lots of different DJs and got into dancing and actually started going to a lot of dance parties to see DJs. I sort of realized that I am still really connected with the punk community and just the fact that there is not a lot of dancing that necessarily happens in that scene. So when I decided to do Vaseline, I wanted to make it more of a party where you could really freak out and dance. Also there would be lots of entertainment, so that people who weren't comfortable dancing, or don't dance, have something else to do, but people who want to dance can dance. I also think that because it is a queer event—and dancing is a huge part of the queer community—people who aren't into mainstream music don't have a lot of options when it comes to a queer space. It was an important thing to make a space where lots of queer people could be together, dancing to a different kind of beat that wasn't being heard anywhere else in this city. For me, I think dancing is really good because people can really express themselves and lose their inhibitions and not really care about anything else that is going on. I think it is like a really good release. It is something for people who don't drink. It is the ultimate entertainment. A lot of parties just aren't very fun if there isn't anything else to do because people are usually just getting bombed, whereas dancing you are having as much fun as people getting wasted. It can be a more entertaining way to party.

MRR: There is other elements that you have borrowed from the dance scene. You use these flyers—small handbill flyers that are full color and glossy. They remind me totally of how underground parties work in terms of promotion. But I have never seen that in hardcore. I have seen handbills as flyers, but they are usually cheap photocopies. But yours are more decked out around the theme of the event. That seems to be a conscious thing.

Will: It is totally a co-opting of underground party promotion. Handbills were important in the dance scene because a lot of parties just happened in weird warehouses and exclusive locations. It was really important to let people know how to get in contact to find out where the party is or where to buy tickets or whatever. I always saw that scene as very similar to the hardcore scene because it was fairly DIY. The dance scene was just a bunch of kids who were throwing parties for themselves. Prices were obviously a little bit more expensive but there was also an underground to that. There were really cheap affordable places to hear good music. And I sort of thought that punk kids do promotion in a very similar way but just a more low budget version. I feel that people are throwing photocopied handbills in the garbage and it was wasteful. Flyers seem so disposable whereas something that is nice that almost has some sort of historical content and is interesting, people actually hold onto it. They keep it. They put it up on their wall. So I started doing promotion that way

because I found it only costs a little bit more than xeroxing and that it actually got the message out a lot better. I was able to let people know what the theme was going to be, but also put cultural icons on these things and celebrate queer culture through my promotion. So it was sort of like promotion, but also sort of like an education at the same time.

MRR: These handbills become like queer trading cards.

Will: They are totally like queer trading cards, because they have all got amazing underground queer icons on them. That is totally what I meant to do with them. I am really glad to learn how to bring those things together because I don't think a lot of people have brought that to hardcore or punk or even rock'n roll.

MRR: How long has Vaseline been going for?

Will: I started Vaseline in January of 2000 and we have been running ever since.

MRR: What happened at the first Vaseline event?

Will: The first Vaseline event I basically booked twenty days before it happened. Basically some friends of mine were willing to get us a space. I booked a local band called Queen Size Shag and got a bunch of friends I knew who were good DJs. They didn't necessarily DJ, but I thought they should DJ because they had a great knowledge of music. I made some flyers and just promoted the hell out of it. "Come and check this out." It went really well with only ten or fifteen days to promote it. I thought, if people will come out to support this with such little notice, I bet you there is more of a need for this. I was just testing the waters to see if this could happen, and the response was so good that I just kept doing them. Initially, my intentions were to do really local stuff and then I started getting bigger and bigger, but there is only so much local live talent that you can get, whereas on a more national and international level there are lots of people you can bring from all over the place to perform, so it just sort of grew from there.

MRR: What are some of the things that have happened at other Vaseline events?

Will: Every month we try to have an audience participation event to get people loosened up and also get them involved. We have done some pretty crazy things so far, like, Roller Derby, Mud Wrestling, amateur stripping, we just had bobbing for dildos, blowjob competition, and various costume competitions. Themes included Vasoween (Halloween), cowboy theme (for Glen Meadmore), a prom massacre. It's more than a little bit out of control, at times.

MRR: Maybe you could describe to me how you set up a Roller Derby track in the el Mocambo?

Will: I think the events that happen at Vaseline are part of how it grew. My experience with Toronto is that it is very conservative, in terms of how people express themselves or how much they freak out. I wanted to do things that would loosen people up. So that's how we started doing events. Plus the events were also fun to do. Get on really stupid outfits and do some dumb things. It was fun and entertaining. I think a lot of people came to check Vaseline out just because they would hear these crazy stories about the events.

MRR: Well they are great things to talk about, but they also represent great memories for people who participate.

Will: Oh yeah, totally. People totally get involved and do things that they would have never done and express themselves a lot more than they do usually so for sure. That was totally what I wanted to do, is to get people to come out of their shells. With the roller derby track, what we did was because the upstairs of the el Mocambo is a fairly big space on each side of the stage and the dance floor. We took one of those sides and moved all the tables out and had a metal divider, like a railing, to separate people who are moving from those sitting down. We just cleared that whole area, put some tables in the middle to make a track, and roped the rest of it off so that people wouldn't walk into the track. We didn't have the track going all night. The roller derby was just something that happened for half an hour before the band. When we promote the event we tell people what we are doing: "There is a roller derby happening." We tell regulars, "If you want to participate, bring some roller skates and some knee pads and just join in." About 15 people showed up with roller skates and crazy outfits and stuff. We had a judge, too, that had a gun to start off the event. We just went around the track ten times and it was pretty crazy. It was out of control. We did three rounds. Chose a winner for each round. Can't remember what we gave people for that. We usually make some sort of a prize for each event.

MRR: For the mudwrestling, how did you get a pen of mud in the club? How did you convince club owners that this would be OK?

Will: That was sort of a country theme, so we thought mud wrestling was appropriate for that party. Basically, we got a Ninja Turtle pool, or some cheap plastic kids' pool, and we decorated it with some tinsel fringe around the edge. For the mud we were going to go to a river and get mud, but it was pretty dry at that time of year so there wasn't any mud. So we just got a couple of bags of topsoil and added oil and water and it looked pretty disgusting. It was really funny because we tried to get people to join in. There were two or three people who were planning and had worked out a way to mudwrestle beforehand. We wanted people from the audience to join in. To just take their clothes off so they wouldn't get that dirty. We had a hose out back. It was summer. We were just hosing people off when they got dirty, but no one would join in because we were joking about putting motor oil and manure in to make it more exciting. I think everyone took it seriously. They got freaked out by it, but they enjoyed the wrestling. They didn't want to jump in shit. It made a pretty big mess of the club. The mud was all over the floor. And Glen Meadmore was going on right after and no one would even move up to the stage because it was so muddy we had get all these newspapers and clean it up for them before they would come and watch.

MRR: Who is Glen Meadmore? Explain his relationship with the cowboy theme.

Will: Glen Meadmore is this crazy guy, this queer punker who has been around for a long time. He is actually from from Winnipeg and lived in Toronto and then moved to LA. So he has been in LA for a really long time, probably ten or fifteen years, and he has put out music under a number of different names. He is probably most familiar under his own moniker, Glen Meadmore. He has sort of had this Born Again

Christian gay honky tonk queer punk band going on for five or six years. He is totally a crazy dude. His latest album cover has a picture of him that was painted by John Wayne Gacy on the cover and it totally looks like Howdy Doody. And he kind of has this Roy Rogers stage presence. He wears really flamboyant cowboy outfits. I saw him once at a Homocore show in Chicago, and it was like an all-dyke squaredancing mosh pit. I was inspired by that. I wanted to do something special for when he came to Toronto, so we did a bit of a Honky Tonk cowboy theme. We painted a mural—it was a desert scene that we put behind him—and we had the mudwrestling. We had Dallas Goode spin some really weird and rare country music for him and it was really fun to have him. I think a lot of people were really freaked out by him because they had never heard his music before and there is pretty strange banter that he goes on about, like "This song is about glory holes and boys and getting your crack greased ..." It is a very old school, kind of good ole boy queerness,and it is pretty shocking at first if you have never heard it or seen it before. It is pretty entertaining.

MRR: Bobbing for dildos is such a great idea. Was that part of the Vasoween/Halloween theme?

Will: Yeah, we had a costume competition for Halloween and we also had bobbing for dildos.

MRR: What did people have to do?

Will: People were on stage at a table with a huge bucket filled with water and I had gone to a really awful cheap mainstream sex store and got some pretty hilarious dildos, like multi colored ones and cheap ones, and we put them all into the big huge bucket of water. It is sort of a take on "Bobbing for apples" at Halloween. You know how people do that at Halloween when they are kids. And it is also a take on safer sex carnivals and safer sex outreach things to play weird sex games to get people to think about safe sex, so it was a spin on both those things. We had people come up from the audience—we actually had too many—we had to get people to get off the stage and people would do it in pairs. So there would be two people and then we would count to three and then the first person to get a dildo in their mouth and out of the water won and they got the dildo and that was like the prize.

MRR: Tell us about the Vasoween theme.

Will: It was a costume party and we called it Vasoween because someone came up with the name as a gag. We were getting hit by the corporate pressure and the name kept changing with the spelling so it was just sort of a joke. Basically we wanted to have a really huge costume party, because a lot of people claim Halloween as a queer holiday because of its pagan connections and also because in history it was always the time where people got away with doing a lot of queer stuff publicly that wasn't accepted normally. In the gay neighborhoods, in most cities, they will even shut down the main streets and have huge parties on Halloween. But anything mainstream and gay has become homogenized and just sort of bland. Not as many people dressing up. It's like one person dressing up and four hundred people taking pictures. So I wanted something to prove that there is still that pagan connection and there is still that carnival and creativity and getting really dressed up and being really weird, because I enjoy that. I think that is a part of queer culture which is important to me and should be celebrated, so we just threw a huge costume party. The ratio was really good. Moreso than most Halloween parties I have been to. Almost everyone was in costume.

MRR: I was going to ask you about the "Prom Massacre." There was a punk rock prom held in the states. Somewhere either in upper state New York or Pennsylvania. Was the idea behind the prom massacre like the anti-prom?

Will: It pretty much was an anti-prom. Well a lot of people wanted a prom. It was actually a request, because people liked the theme. So regulars throw out their own ideas for themes and the prom was something that kept coming up. For me I never liked prom stuff of any kind or school dances. I never went to them and I never wanted to so for me making the prom a prom massacre demonstrates my own distaste for them. But also I think proms for punks or for queers or for queer punks—I can see why people want to do them. These folks don't fit into normal school culture and have that need to do it their own way. They might enjoy certain aspects of that party but just feel excluded because of the way they look or because of who they like so I think that's why it is happening. I think there is definitely a connection for why we would do a prom at Vaseline because even in the gay community there are proms for queer youth, so there have been gay proms and stuff like that, so it sort of makes sense that in the punk community there would be punk proms because the punks are too cool or too different to go to the normal high school prom. They would rather go to something a little more edgy and interesting where there are kids that they would actually want to hang out with.

MRR: What happened at the prom?

Will: Well because it was a prom massacre, the point was that somebody had to get massacred. So we mixed a whole bunch of corn oil with red dye. The plan was that we were going to kill people, turn the lights off early in the night, have someone scream and have someone fall on the floor covered in blood. It just ended up being too busy and too hard to coordinate. So at the end of the night when people were dancing some people started covering each other with blood and pretending to die on the floor and being dragged off by someone else and people didn't understand what was happening. They thought that people were actually getting injured or stabbed. Some people got freaked out, but it was a "prom massacre" and it took people a while to see the humor in it. It seemed all fine and normal to the people who were sober but everyone else was a little miffed by it. So I don't know if that will happen again, but things like "Vasoween" will happen because Halloween will happen and things like "Shame" are themes that happen every year. "Shame" is our answer to "Pride." Whenever "Pride" happens, Vaseline will always do a "Shame," which is to counter it, because Pride is so mainstream and so corporate and so commercial and so homogenized and bland and boring that there should be something to counter it—the opposite of that would be "Shame." Because Vaseline's crowd is mostly marginal crowds of gay culture, the way we express our sexuality or enjoy our sexuality could be shameful for a lot of people who find mainstream "Pride" acceptable, so that is our answer to it. We want people to celebrate shamefulness and do shameful things because we don't have any morality to place on those things. It is really a subversion of "Pride," so we have this "Shame" festival every year. That will be something that will always happen as long as Vaseline is going.

MRR: Who are some of the folks who have performed at Vaseline events,and what did they do?

Will: We had performers like Vaginal "Creme" Davis, who performed her virgin sacrifice called "Cherries in the Snow." Glen Meadmore, who performed with his band doing his usual Born Again Christian honky tonk country. Miss Guy from the Toilet Boys has DJd. Kembra Pfahler (of the Voluptuous Horror of Karen Black) performed her tribute to *Blade Runner*, and her version of the *Titanic's* theme song. The Need has performed their rock opera wonders. Tracy & Her Plastics spread her video age new wave. Jayne County took me out for dinner but never actually reached the stage of Vaseline. We have had locals like Shaftdrive (80s all girl metal band), The Hidden Cameras (new local queer indie rock experience), C.J Sleeze & The STDs (Toronto's answer to Texas Terry or Wendy O' Williams), and many more.

MRR: What other things do you have planned for some of the Vaseline events coming up?

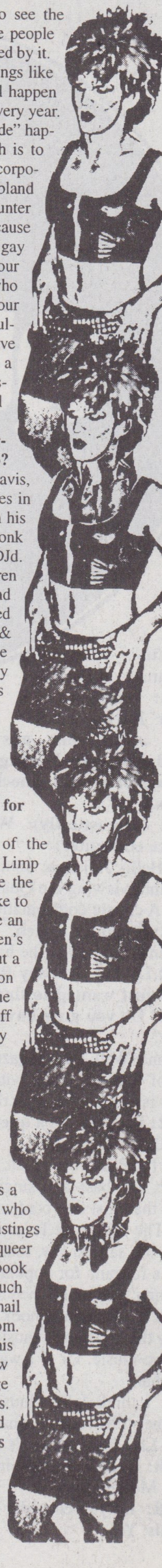
Will: Upcoming plans include Cherie Currie of the Runaways. I hope to bring hardcore favorites Limp Wrist. I'd also like to bring some glam acts like the Toilet Boys, Candyass from NYC; I would also like to bring Le Tigre, and Bullet, also from NYC. I have an idea for a night themed after filmmaker Isaac Julien's movie named "Young Soul Rebels"—a story about a punk boy falling in love with a pirate radio station soul boy. Maybe also a rock 'n' roll disco punkteque night, I am going to start a small no-new wave off shoot called "Peroxide." I plan to get Jayne County to DJ or perform.

MRR: When does Vaseline take place?

Will: Vaseline takes place the last Friday of every month.

MRR: How can people get in touch with you if they want to find out about Vaseline? Is there a posting for Vaseline?

Will: Yeah, I post on "Holy Tit Clamps," which is a great resource for any queer punk bands or people who want to travel or anything like that. Larry Bob has listings of every band that is on tour that is within the queer musical genre and he also lists all sites are cool to book with and listed it under there if they want to get in touch with me. All my information is there. They can email me. My email address is apocalipstick@hotmail.com. I list on other sites that are sort of meccas for this genre, like say Heartcore Records, Chainsaw Records, and Mr. Lady Records. All have message boards that are great places to look for messages. Heartcore Records is heartcorerecords.com and Chainsaw is chainsaw.com and Mr. Lady Records is mr.ladyrecords.com. They have great message boards, so that is usually where I post on the internet. My mailing address is 888 Dupont Street, Unit 100 / Toronto, ON / M6G 1Z8 / Canada.



THE QUAILS

The Quails are a San Francisco-based three-piece musical outfit who have been playing music together since 1999. They are Jen Smith (vocals/guitar), Julianna Bright (vocals/drums), and Seth Lorinczi (vocals/guitar/bass). Each of the three have previously performed around the Bay Area, DC, and Olympia, WA punk scenes in bands called Rastro, the Electrolettes, and Circus Lupus, to name a few of their past projects. Their album We Are The Quails is available now on Inconvenient Recordings, and they are currently busy recording a new album to tentatively be released summer 2002. They have been known to tour up and down the west and east coasts and various points in between when time allows. Their music is a combination of a Kinks-y songwriting style with a musical sensibility I'd say makes them sound like an early 80s Midwestern US new wave band, like Get Smart or Human Switchboard. This interview was conducted by C. Le Grid (one half of electronic duo Feelings on a Grid) It took place in the back of the Quailmobile, Sunday January 13, after a performance at the Bottom of the Hill in SF.

Seth: My finger hurts.

MRR: Seth's finger hurts, which may affect his answers (Suddenly DM Feelings, the other half of Feelings on a Grid, knocks on the car door and enters.)

MRR (sarcastically): Wow, what a random, chance encounter!

DM: Hello. Julianna: So now it's like Feelings on a Grid interviewing the Quails.

Seth: A classic confrontation.

MRR: A grudge match.

Julianna: A battle of the bands.

MRR:Let me first say this is for *Maximum Rocknroll*, and I just wanted to find out what that makes you guys think? Do you guys have any thoughts regarding that magazine?

Julianna: Well, that magazine's not really spoken to me in the past, but part of that has to do with their not really speaking to women's or queer issues. So here's a reason to do this interview.

MRR: Because it's a queer issue. Describe your sound, if you will.

Jen: Dance Damage.

Seth: I feel like our music, yeah, it's rock. There's electric guitars and drums and bass and singing. But hopefully we speak to something more than just that context.

Jen: The music we love to listen to is like, arty, punky music, and I think it's safe to say, music from an earlier time, when there wasn't such a formula for popular music. More all over the map.

Julianna: You mentioned earlier (before this interview) that we have a knack for the poppy hook. Which I take as a compliment. But I don't know that I listen to music that way. I think of myself as liking more chaotic music. Or if I want melodic, writerly music, it's like, Sarah Vaughan.

Seth: I think I like music that expresses ambiguity in some way, whether it be rock or whatever. But ambiguity: sonically, or lyrically.

DM: Like how bisexuals are ambiguous?

MRR: Excuse me, bi-phobic interloper!

DM: Monosexual.

MRR: Do you consider yourselves part of a queer punk scene?

Quails: Yes.

MRR: You've all three already played in various projects in various punk scenes. Do you guys feel like there's a difference playing in the Bay Area versus those other places? I would ask in terms of race matters/class matters/gender matters/sexuality matters, and how closely knit the scenes were or are.

Seth: Definitely. Well, I'll just comment on the closely knit thing. In DC there was a limited pool of musicians, but you had a pretty good knowledge or expectation of what people were into music-wise. And it meant sometimes it was homogeneous, but also that there were people whose style you really liked. And also, I felt that the scene was really supportive, in terms of borrowing equipment or jumping on a bill, that kind of thing. But, in terms of queer dynamics, or female, or representation of something other than the white, male punk band, I leave that subject to Jen.

Jen: I definitely feel like it's mostly rock and roll, with a sort of art/punk twinge, which in truth, is this certain kind of music with a pretty small vernacular, as are the number of people who are attracted to it or interested in it. This genre of music seems to attract mostly white people.

MRR: Well, though rock and roll is a black music. And there are still plenty of black rock musicians and fans around. But yeah, a lot of the audience and many performers at this stage in the game are white. We (Feelings on a Grid) talk about how it seems like there's lots of white, punky people who come to our shows, and what are we going to do with that fact. So we try to address that.

Jen: Which I think is awesome, that you guys talk about being white folks singing to mostly white folks, and that your songs are about race and class issues. And I think that's an important and good way to address it. And also, the idea that as white people we need to be allies to people of color, which doesn't mean speaking for them. But being educated as white people.

Seth: Yeah. There's a way in which some white folks try to speak about race that becomes so condescending and trite. The "we're here to help" idea.

Jen: If you're going to interject queerness and gender politics into the mix. It rules being here. I mean, I go to DC, where I feel like there are a couple of places that are the mainstays of the scene. So you go to this certain bar. And I know I'm not the only person who's queer, but I feel like it's stunning to look around and identify no queer people, or there's the one dyke who's lived in DC forever against all odds, and that is who is queer in this room. And then there's a sense that nobody else in the room is mad or as uncomfortable and freaked out by that as me.

Seth: Or like, in DC, knowing people in the punk scene who were closeted.

Julianna: Actually closeted, or just not outspoken?

Jen: Well, both. And certain situations where like, these boys are lovers, but no one can know.

DM: Who?

Seth: I have to be honest, Gary. It was you.
Julianna: I hope the political side of our music makes us available to people of color. That's what I want more of for this band, the chance to play community shows where there's a lot of different voices going on. 'Cause I do hope there's parts to our music that would speak to people in the way that rap speaks to me, or soul speaks to me. Not to be presumptuous.
MRR: "Your Heart's a Muscle the Size of a Fist," and "Soon the Rest will Fall," are songs you perform out regularly, which seem to me to be about gentrification and basically, staying strong and remaining human in the face of ominous governmental factors. You've also been known to involve crowds at your shows in discussions on local political matters like rent control, and the (SF Board of) Supervisors race.
Seth: Bicycle politics.
Jen: A topic nearest and dearest to Seth's heart.
MRR: And matters of a local feel. How do you all approach using space on stage as a forum for that kind of talk? Is it kind of premeditated, or do you just let it come out?
Seth: Hee hee. It's definitely not premeditated. My favorite shows are shows that try to eliminate barriers between the band and the audience.
Jen: We have conversations with each other on topics that matter. We try to keep versed in things that feel important to us. I guess we're folks that think about politics a fair share, certainly as much as we think about anything else, it rates pretty heavy.
MRR: How's the audience's response?
Seth: It depends.
Jen: Well, we don't always get the response we want, but some people tell us we make music that makes them glad they live around us.
Julianna: Our friend Heart 101 went on tour with us this summer to the East Coast. He made these beautiful posters that had some of our song lyrics on them. Some nights, I think to entertain himself, he would engage people in conversations about the songs. And one of the things he said to us was that most people found it to be a distinguishing point. Also playing this radio show at WFMU in New Jersey, the dj was saying how rare it was to have a band come in singing political songs.
Jen: We're attracted to bands who make songs about political topics, as strongly as we're drawn to the music they make. It's also what's interesting to me personally. You can make a song out of anything—your shopping list or whatever. But since we take up public space and time, I think our songs should include public discourse. We live in a culture that's done a lot to derail critical consciousness., and sometimes people are unwilling to entertain the idea that maybe there is a better way.
Julianna: Or that humility and sensitivity are options in political discourse.
Jen: Or public life. Because to me that's what politics is, public life.
MRR: You're recording a new album now. Do you feel like your material has changed as opposed to the first album, and how so?
Jen: The music has changed. Seth is playing bass more. Lyrically, I think things are right on time.
Seth: We're just more confident.
Julianna: It's been so great to sort of migrate with what's inspiring to us and to hear things and be able to bring things to practice. And to rediscover records. We all listen to music together, we like a lot of the same bands. We can talk obsessively about a part of a song forever. And just getting closer as friends has totally influenced the kind of music we make.
MRR: Is there anything that you're really into right now that you want to tell the world about?
Jen: There's one on-line magazine our friend, Dean Spade, puts out called, www.makezine.org, where issues around global politics, creativity, transgenderism, and activism are discussed. And it's a queer space, and we love him so much and we appreciate just about everything he's ever said to us. And certainly we have friends who make really beautiful things. Heart 101 continues to make really incredible art/public art.
Julianna: Sookie Koban, Xylor Jane, Sara Jaffe, and Feelings on a Grid are all really cool to the Quails.
Jen: And if you've got any free stuff for us, ooh, we love that. If you are interested in contacting the Quails or acquiring one of their records, you can do so at: Decomposition / 3288 21st St. / PMB 33 / San Francisco,CA 94110 or by email: decomposition@mindspring.com.

SKINJOBS

Lee Hendon (drums, guitars, vocals), Byron Newlove (bass, vocals), Mitch Fury (guitars, vocals, drums)

MRR: How did the Skinjobs come about?

Lee: I was complaining to Mitch about not gettin' any, so we decided to start a band to get some.

Byron: Mitch and Lee equal good tunes and great people. I tried out for the "bass player" title in summer of 2000. We've been musically holding hands ever since.

Mitch: With the future of all things being cast into a state of uncertainty, we decided to reclaim all things pertinent in the current consciousness of *now*. Accepting that we are exactly where we need to be, right now, precisely and without question, there is no need to spend any more time contemplating "What *if* we were the Skinjobs?" We *are* the Skinjobs. So putting truth into action has lead to the manifestation of what is now simply the Skinjobs-but simple, it is not.

MRR: Do you think that a sexual agenda might be alienating to people who aren't used to thinking about it?

Lee: Come on, everybody thinks about sex!

Byron: That's part of the point. People need to acknowledge things, and realize that perspective and diversity are only scary because they are unfamiliar. I want to help show that the alien is actually *human*.

Mitch: I would have to agree. Society in the past has stifled the subject of sex, and in doing so has created an underworld, its language is not unfamiliar in our thoughts, only unfamiliar in some of our actions. The Skinjob revolution shines light on the dark corners of our minds to foster and nurture a reclaimed state of being, one that is not cast in the shadows of shame, prejudice, and judgement. We are bringing attention to the hypocrisy of current conservative idioms. Suggesting to "Stifle the urge, it will politely go away" while promoting "Just be yourself" is contradictory. Mindsets that are accepting "Sex sells (as long as it fits into a quantifiable little box labeled 'normal/family values/procreation')" are accepting a two-tier system of "normal" and "anything different than normal." We are the different, and we won't be stifled any longer. We most definitely won't politely go away.

MRR: Why the name Skinjobs?

Lee: Because Led Zeppelin is already taken.

Byron: It's a term from *Blade Runner*. They are replicants of human beings, kind of like super humans with short life spans. We're super human queers walking around like everyone else, and no one, mostly, can tell.

Mitch: Our name is consciously misappropriated. In the movie *Blade Runner*, it was used as a derogatory term for replicants, who being genetically superior to humans, were purposely created with a four-year "expiry date." They could not be distinguished from other "real" humans. We've chosen to use the term Skinjobs as a parallel to queers who are as equally undistinguishable from the rest of society, or at least masters of surviving under the radar. We borrow the question from *Blade Runner*, "What is human?" and further, "What is queer?"

MRR: Why do you think the HomoCore movement never exploded the same way, for example, as

the riot grrrl movement did?
Lee: Huh?
Byron: It's just another angle/community, which has not had an opportunity, as a result of various oppressing forces, to be visibly, tangibly acknowledged.
Mitch: In the history of the civil rights movements within North America, the women's rights movements came before any queer rights movements. As intrinsically connected as they are, there seems to be a linear progression of thought plans that suggest: 1) North Americans are incredibly stubborn and grow overly attached to archaic ideologies, to the point of suppressing their own selves. 2) Our patriarchal system has thrust nurturing solely on the shoulders of women, and thus, it is from their lead that the rest will follow, all in time.
MRR: What's your opinion on where we stand as queers today?
Lee: We stand on Davie St., Commercial Drive, Main St., and Stanley Park.
Byron: Oooh, toughy. "We"-I can't speak for every wonderful and unique queer out there, there is too great of a range for me to represent. But I will say, I feel that there is movement towards acknowledgment and more understanding of every queer imaginable. I feel a diverse community can unite together for support, comfort, acknowledgement, and friendship.
Mitch: We are at an excruciatingly painful and boring state as humans that requires us to label ourselves under a sexual identity in order to further the process of breaking down the societal norms of acceptable sexual interaction and acceptable gender identification. The goal is simple but the means is complicated. People want to be their unique selves. In many ways the "queer" (for lack of a better word) communities seem to be fighting for greater acceptance from the rest of society, while trying to quantify and define each other. This seems to be leading us to a point where the rest of society will become open-minded, less defined sexually, and more inclusive, while the queer community stuck on maintaining a separate identity will implode upon itself as it becomes more rigid and limited. Sexual identity will be short-lived as compared to sexual actions-which have been the same since day one, quite diverse, just not well documented; it's a long journey that isn't over, it takes time. Documentation is the first step-re-creating a sexually diverse history that everyone owns.
MRR: How do the Skinjobs fit into the Punk community?
Lee: *We Rock!*
Byron: I don't know really. I personally am not a butterfly flitting in one circle. I'll let Mitch answer this one.
Mitch: Simple with the history of punk being a social cast for misfits, freaks, and queers. Somehow, that is often forgotten. The early punk scene of the 70s, not that I was around back then, was very queer, or sexually ambiguous, without labeling itself as such. Non-conformity was a strong held statement. In being so open-minded and accepting, the punk scene was an easy target for mainstream appropriation. Mass marketing in the 90s watered it down, to make it seem less threatening-and in doing so, omitting anything about punk sexuality. We're here to bring it back.
MRR: How do the Skinjobs fit into the Queer community?
Lee: We're sexy.
Byron: This is hard to answer too. The level of interaction now with band and community, except as shining individuals, has been minimal. I have *extreme hope* for a friendly, two-way, good street to walk down and smile at every fucking person you see, type o' relationship.
Mitch: Questionably at times, we fit on the fringe of the community if anywhere. Sex sells, so we give it to them. I don't expect the queer community to embrace us as fully as an ABBA cover band, but I believe they will embrace us more, in some ways, than the punk community. Our existence seems to threaten the calm blue water of complacency. The queer community's strongest power as of late has been its money, and in a capital-

MRR: How do the Skinjobs fit into the Queer community?

Lee: We're sexy.

ist system that means something, however shallow that may be. With all the hoopla over rainbow banners on the streets, in the gay ghettos of whatever city, it's hard to imagine anyone taking a break from their latté to question privileges, and realize that the visibly queer community is only for those who can afford the image, while within the safety of a queer friendly community. Is there a parallel between the high rent prices of many urban centers and the yuppie queer communities that thrive in them? I think so. Pride has a price.

MRR: What's the Queer Punk scene like in Vancouver?

Lee: *Fucking bleak!*

Byron: Uhhh, what queer punk scene? Fuck, this is great, I feel like a pioneer.

Mitch: It's starting to grow thanks to all the kids in the Queer Punk Collective, plus Vancouver has a lot of cool zines, spoken-word performances, and the File This Cabaret. If it weren't for the Queer Punk Collective, we probably wouldn't exist, kisses to them all!

MRR: What are some of you influences?

Lee: Animal, beer, Sunny Day, chicks, Thirty Ought, beer, pizza, and TV.

Byron: I am a latticework of influences, classical to jungle/new house to metal to folk. But a few inspirations are Tori Amos, James Brown, Dave Matthews, and Pearl Jam.

Mitch: Cute boy bands that take their shirts off, Blink 182 for mocking a cute boy band taking their shirts off, Imperial Teen for making the best queer pop punk I've ever heard, Green Day's Tre Cool for shoving a drumstick up his butt and telling everyone at the party he liked it (OK, maybe that's a rumor), Grant and the Smugglers, Panty Raid, XLimpwristX (for simply being), Maynard from A Perfect Circle, Rob Halford from Judas Priest, Demian from Playingenemy, Dan from the Murder City Devils, Slow from Portland, Meegan and Che Chapter 127, Chi Pig from SNFU, the singer from Boy Sets Fire, Jon and the boys from Pansy Division, and don't forget, Lil' Kim for rapping with the best of them, and telling them where to lick it!

MRR: Where do you see the Skinjobs going in the next year?

Lee: To the depths of the subconscience, building a tight bond among aspiring queers, making them unafraid to be themselves.

Byron: Up, up, and away! Fuck, I don't know or really care, this is the most fun I've had since grade three.

Mitch: New York. Home is calling, we've been away too long. Vancouver is a nice place to live, but the Skinjobs need to go home to the East Village. We want to record, make a video, and play for a bit in Vancouver-the boys and girls here are cute. After taking advantage of Canada and the great American exchange rate, then we'll rock back to Dumba, Squeeze Box, and CBGB's-maybe move back to NYC. I have a date waiting at Cock 129, and I need some Goldberg's Peanut Chews!

MRR: The Skinjobs definitely have an image. How would you explain it?

Lee: Our image reflects on how sexy we are, and that with a bunch of make-up and hair accessories, anything is possible.

Byron: Imagine being honest and kind, ready to learn, ready to listen, fucking ready to rock, and having a sweet time doing it. Surprise! It's true, that's us, no goopy pomp ignorance negative - just three awesome queers trying to do well with music, and attitude that surges with good, zesty, delicious queer power.

Mitch: Freak-Perv, it's not just about us, it's the audience. What a bunch of freaks! We've taken pointers from Priss-the Princess of Blade Runner; from here on, anything goes! I think you also have to ask our go-go dancers about their image, because without them, we'd have no image-and we never know what is going to happen with them on stage. Miss Cookie, Miss Kelly, and Darlene, The Ambassador's Wife have always been one step ahead of us, and the audience-they give great punk fashion tips!

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ITALIAN QUEER PUNK REPORT

I'll take you on a tour of the Italian underground queer scene, even if the trip is going to be rather brief. Let's begin in Milan, home of *Speed Demon*, an antagonistic queer zine spreading free, non-conformist, non-conditioned forms of thought, promoting independent homosexual communication through political/artistic expression.

Apart from *Speed Demon* there is a radio program broadcasting every Monday on Radio Onda d'Urto (from 10:00 pm to 11:00 pm: FM 98) that only plays music by underground queer bands (you know who I'm talking about), trying to offer something different from the mainstream gay music scene.

Speed Demon is the result of a desire to communicate with all non-aligned queer people and every contact, lead, collaboration, or exchange of materials is more than welcome. (Speed Demon / PO Box 44/a / P.zza San Babila 4/d / 20122 Milan / Italy / speeddemon@galactica.it / www.speeddemon.it)

Two other fanzines have recently started up: my *SympatheticHomoNun* fag goth zine, a personal zine that looks into the gothic queer world, and *I Wanna Spread My Dementia*, a zine of queer tales and collections of queer short stories. (mySHN or IWSMD / PO Box 443/a / P.zza San Babila 4/d / 20122 Milan / Italy / meekdead@hotmail.com)

As far as the queer-skin scene goes, Hotskin is the only crew of active gay skinheads in the Italian queer scene. Focus point for the group is the webzine hotskin.it. A recent video, *Oi! Oi! We Fuck Boys!* was screened in the Queer Frames section of the 2001 edition of the Milan G&L film festival. Followers of the European queer skin scene, promoting its events in Italy, they are involved in building an antiracist and queer-friendly skinhead scene. The Hotskin guys invite anyone who is interested in offering support and help to contact them. (crew@hotskin,it / www.hotskin.it)

Before leaving the city I wanted to point out Pornflakes queer crew, a group of young people who organize alternative queer nights in squats, offering an *alternativa* to the usual gay clubs and bars. Their manifesto reads: "Ingredients: queer (traces of homosexual non-homologation) & oblique means of expression. Energetic Value: metabolizing/reconstructing places through visual stimulations & sound frequencies. Nutrition Value: dykes and fags from *Speed Demon* (non-mainstream queer zine) & Mountain Dyke (antagonistic dyke crew) stuff. Vitamins: parties, performances, dj sets, video installations, drag king & queen shows, live art, psychodramas, vegetarian picnic, caterings around the world." (pornflakes6@hotmail.com)

Let's now move to Rome, where *Torazine* is published. It's a multicolored capsule of pop counterculture. *Torazine* is big and complex, like a book; astonishing like no drug is; independent like no other DIY project has dared before. *Torazine* is an explosive mix of countercultures and pop imagery; its communicative cancer spread culture-wide, creating a hybrid of conceptual scenarios in between subversion and popular strategy. Countercultures, sciences, esoterism, conspiracy theories, mass control, great reporting, masturbation, comics, sex deviance, weapons, queer culture, noise (180 bpm) 100% aesthetic perversion and anal/filactic shock. *Torazine* is the norm, *Torazine* is the dawn. (torazine@disinfo.net / headcleaner@kyuzz.org / www.kyuzz.org/ ordanomade.html)

Clit Rocket: faggot zine, written in English about feminism, punk rock & glitter stars. (Veruska c/o Fioritto / Via O. da Gubbio 237 / 00146 Rome / Italy / faggygirl@yahoo.it)

PorcaMadonna distro was the first and (sadly) only DIY girl & queer mailorder in Italy since 1997. Formerly focused on political and personal zines by girls and dykes from all over the world, it distributes titles by queer boys as well. The catalog is in Italian, but you can get in touch for your zine/record/book/pamphlet/production to be carried. Giulia, the kid behind it, writes *Punto-G* ("g-spot" in Italian) zine, books shows for local and foreign girl/queer punk and hardcore bands with attitude, and recently shares the running of the Ape Regina (queen bee) radio show. She's also going to start her own record label. The first title on Vida Loca records (wopey@hotmail.com) is the new Subtonix single. Promos from bands and zinesters are more than welcome-please, don't write PorcaMadonna on the correspondence. (Giulia Vallicelli / Via Cassia 901A / 00189 Rome / Italy / madonnina@yahoo.com)

Ape Regina is an anarchofeminist radio show on Radio Onda Rossa in the self-run feminist space every Tuesday (from 7:30 pm to 6:30 pm-FM 87.900) with selection of queer music and readings from all over the world. (aperegina / queenbee@katamail.com / www.tmcrew.org/ror)

Ciao, Flavio

VAGINAL DAVIS

MRR: What is homocore/ queercore to you, and what was your impact on it?

Vaginal Davis: Homocore/queercore as a recognized movement didn't really happen until May 1991 in Chicago, at Spew, the "homographic convergence" that took place at the Randolph Street Gallery. This was a historical event. It was the first queer zine convention, where people who had been corresponding for years actually got together at the same place, and met, and had an exchange.

The term, "homocore," was coined by G.B. Jones of the legendary dyke post-punk band Fifth Column. Tom Jennings borrowed the term for his Bay area-based queer zine. The early rumblings that led to it becoming an official movement were headed by Jeffrey Kennedy, who produced what I think is the first queer-content zine, *Boysville*. Then came *JD's*, G.B. Jones's zine with Bruce La Bruce, her short films and Tom Girl drawings, and the small core group of people surrounding them, like Candy of Candyland Productions, Don Pyle of Shadowymen Shadowy Planet in Toronto, and the art collective New Lavender Panthers. Toronto is a very important city, more so than New York, in that Canadians are true freaks who are more willing to abandon white middle-classism than people in any other North American city. I give true props to the Canadians, and without them their would have never been the homocore movement. The intellectualism that was going on, the humor, the critique-ing of the gay bourgeoisie, making music, art, films, and zines, all this was going on hand-in-hand. Now people who get into zines are all careerist, thinking it will help them become famous.

Also contributing to making the early scene was the activity at the Pyramid Club in New York, especially the scene around Wigstock and Linda/Les Simpson, who did *My Comrade/Sister Magazine*. It was highly influential.

I was one of the few West Coast queens who was nationally known at the time. I did a magazine, *Fertile La Toyah Jackson*, which I considered a magazine, not a zine. I patterned it after that entertainment arts mag from the 1970s, *After Dark*. I've been self-publishing magazines since I was a child, and they all had the same content, more or less, as *Fertile*. I worked within my means. I didn't have a computer, but I used a 1920s Royal typewriter, and my day job was at UCLA, where I had access to free xeroxing. Only a city like LA could produce a creature like me-someone who could look at the beast and tear it open with a critical and humorous eye. I've never believed in the magik, being that I wasn't born of privilege or with means. I'm an inner city girl who had to create her own magik from within herself. LA can offer so much enchantment, but that same enchantment can also lead people to their doom. There is nothing laid-back about LA; it's a hard-knock town. But it fools you into a sense of false complacency, because of the mild climate. It's been able to work that since the 1920s, and many a writer has come here from the East to be destroyed. Europeans do well here, because they see through the facade. People like Christopher Isherwood, The Mann Bros., Brecht, Grande Dame Marta Feutchvongers, and her famous

The current climate of sex and sexuality is more limiting and less interesting. There was a time that every punk boy had a drag queen girlfriend- it was the norm.

novelist husband whose name I can't place at the moment.

MRR: Do you think that it's important to have an alternative to mainstream gay culture?

Vaginal Davis: "Gay" today equals "Spend here now!" As someone who doesn't own any property, and has never owned or driven a car, I really do not fit into mainstream gay culture, or any culture. I'm such a individualist that I do not really fit in anywhere. That's why I do not really relate to terms like "gay community;" it's not something I believe in. Gays, in general, aren't very accepting of difference and have little tolerance for individuality. I really do not see much of a difference between mainstream gays and so-called "alternative gays." It's just fashion. Now shaved heads and goatees are the new clone look, replacing preppy-it's all the same to me. I try to deal with everyone as an individual, see what kind of animal they are. Smelling someone's butthole helps. Now I know why dogs do it.

MRR: How do you think the current political situation in this country could affect gays?

Vaginal Davis: Oh, do not let me get started-but I will just the same. Now that Bush is in office, I keep hearing these tired so-called white "liberals" and gay Care Bear activists complaining, being all, "Woe is me." To a Black drag queen, there absolutely no difference between Bush and Clinton, or whoever is in any political office in this country. And I ain't buying that tired argument about worrying about social security and the environment. So-called "liberals" couldn't care less about the environment, or anything but themselves and their own comforts. If they really cared, they would be volunteering in the inner city; or visiting nursing homes and making friends with the elderly and displaced, who are in need of some company; or they'd adopt older and abused or neglected children, and not be so set on having a little cute biological baby that they never spend any time with, that their nanny from El Salvador will be raising anyway. It's all lip service and I see right through it. I do not go by what people say, I go by what they actually do.

As an artist, I see that things could actually be better under Republican rule. It will force things to be underground, and more subversive, and more interesting. Like in the 1920s, with The Jazz Age, and in the late 1940s and 1950s with the beats, bebop, and then rock 'n' roll. Ford was president when punk rock came into existence.

As far as "the gays"-they are in bed with Babylon the Great and all they care about is making money. That's fine, but do not pretend it's about anything else.

Vaginal Davis is a construct. She is an art persona. She is the main and most well-known internationally of the many personas I have used over the years. I created her as a sexualized tribute to my idol, Angela Davis. The middle name of Creme was attributed to me by Craig Lee, the music editor of the *LA Weekly*, who was also in the legendary punk band The Bags. He called me Vaginal Creme, because back in the early-to-mid 1980s, at my shows with the performance group, The Afro Sisters, fans would throw vaginal cream ointments and suppositories up on stage as a tribute. The name sort of stuck on me even though I've tried to get rid of it. The true diehard fans know more minute details of my life and my career than I even remember. That is the blessing and the curse of the internet. Also I've been profiled in many academic treatise, articles, books, and the like. So if you do your homework on me, all this stuff is out there.

MRR: What made you mention the movie, *May I Be Your Bratwurst*, that stars Jeff Stryker?

Vaginal Davis: I made the film for German Television. It was directed by the great German director, Rosa Von Praunheim. It's not one of Rosa's best efforts. We did another film together, where I play German expatriate art maven Marta Feutvonger.

Of course, I've made many films in collaboration with Bruce La Bruce, plus shorts that I've directed, and that have screened at film festivals and forums all over the world. A lot of people aren't really aware that I'm an experimental filmmaker, as well as a musician, and a writer. People have such short memories. There are those who only know me because of Club Sucker and being the hostess and DJ at that one particular club. It's somewhat insulting, especially when you have been around so long, and people think you've only done the one or two things that they just happened upon. It never fails to amaze me.

MRR: Tell us about a favorite moment in punk.

Vaginal Davis: They are too numerous, but I can remember a time in the late 1970's when the punk scene in urban LA proper was a little over 100 people, and they all pretty much new each other. I never really considered myself a punk. My individualistic rebelliousness could never let me claim affinity to it. But one aspect that was refreshing was how sexuality in those days was so fluid. Boys didn't really identify themselves as "gay" per say, but they freely took part in gay sex with lusty abandon. The current climate of sex and sexuality is more limiting and less interesting. I've had sex with many punk luminaries, like Billy Idol and Glen Danzig, and it really wasn't a big deal. There was a time that every punk boy had a drag queen girlfriend-it was the norm.

What I feel is important is for people to discover things about me on their own, if they are so inclined. I did a lot of shows with Le Tigre, and it really made me want to keep performing. I go in and out of wanting to perform live. I do not like touring in the traditional sense. I pretty much only do visiting artist performances and lectures at colleges, universities, and art schools within the United States; and I show visual art work in galleries around the world. I still do club shows in Europe, but I do not like being around drunks and dope addicts, or cigarette smoke.

The audiences for Le Tigre were so fresh and inquisitive. These kids did their homework on me, and they were smart and informed; they reminded me of how I was when I was their age. I didn't wait to be turned on by something, I went out and sought things out. It was harder in those days, because underground things were very hard to come by, they weren't as easily co-opted as they are now. You really had to put out the effort, and forge friendships in different cities and countries via old-fashioned letter writing, but it was exciting and rewarding.

The advice I'd give someone questioning or struggling with identity is to read a book. I'd give them Jane Austen. I'd say, "Stop thinking about yourself and your adolescent problems. Read about ancient Egypt. Read about India." That's the way to solve your problems. You have to have a much larger perspective, and understand the larger culture. Having some positive role model doesn't solve anything, it has to come from learning about general human life.

All this stuff about being gay and happy-like being happy and adjusted is the end-all. It's the outsider view of culture that is the most interesting. People who are happy are slugs. That's why you see these inane white gay men together shopping, and they look just like each other, they could be brothers-mirror images, dull as toast. Or Lesbians and all those cats. Or these kids who are computer turds. The internet is almost like being a bird lady, being someone who mindlessly feeds all the pigeons in the neighborhood.

QUEER PUNX ROUNDTABLE

MRR: The reason I wanted to do this is to bring some people together that may have different perspectives on being queer and being into punk. The first thing I wanted to bring up is the concept of being queer and being punk, and ask, are the two compatible at all these days? Is the punk scene supportive? Really supportive? Not at all supportive?

Martin: Let's take it from the compatible part. I think for me being punk and queer, it makes sense for them to go together. From what my understanding of punk is and how I feel as a queer, I'm more shocked when someone says they're punk and they're *not* queer—that kinda throws me a little bit sometimes.

Ace: I discovered punk first, and when I came out as queer, I was punk already, so it just made sense to me. The thing that kind of freaked me out, and I think to this day it still kind of does, is just going into different scenes—punk shows and shit like that—where I'm not understood or taken seriously for who I am.

Gary: I came into punk when I was older and was already out. I wanted to be part of something that was really political and the punk scene at large was really not… *(laughter)* The queer punk scene held a little more promise, but at that point—like when I was working at Epicenter—people were like, "Why should those groups be women only, queer only?" there was a lot of reaction like that. And then the queer punk thing happened, and it was good for a while, but the focus of it was pretty single-issue. I know a lot of people think about a lot of broad range of issues, but in the scene as a whole, there wasn't a lot of coalition building.

Aaron: I think the major problem with the queer punk scene as it stands today is its single focus. It's an identity focus thing, which can be good for starters, but if you are just focused on one part of your identity you're probably privileged in a lot of different ways. That's a problem, since you're just focused on that, while trying to interact with other races, genders, whatever, trying to come together to create one larger sense of community.

Iraya: You get punk, if it's the political punk thing, which is growing out of a white-dominated lefty thing, or branched off the Euro-avant garde thing. And then you have the white-dominated gay mainstream stuff that a lot of queers don't feel they identify with. Punk rock was something that I got into because in the 80s, so much of the radical infrastructure from the 60s and 70s had been destroyed—so it was one of the last things that was still going that was "underground." And I felt like a weirdo, so I was really attracted to it. So for me, as someone who spent a lot of time putting on shows and "scene-support" for a lot of early 90s queer punk stuff, I felt like I have to let a lot of that stuff go because it can be white-oriented. I think that you were getting a lot of white queer kids who identified with punk rock in a way that I didn't as a dyke of color. Originally gay liberation jumped off from the civil rights movement, but with it grew a gay white male assimilationist agenda. It's like in the 70s, you had white lesbian separatist kind of stuff being held as the center of lesbian culture and politics, but all the lesbians of color were there, and had their voices marginalized. I think it's the same sort of thing, where punk rock has sort of taken the center stage in the queer community (at least in SF), like, "this is the radical thing," and since it is white-dominated, it gets center stage, over let's say, queer hip-hop. This is the problem that I have with queer punk.

Mimi: When I came to the Bay Area and started working at Epicenter, around '92 or '93—that's where I got to meet Iraya—it was a very great, but short lived, period. I got there, and there were all these great things that I thought were going on—I saw more people of color involved in punk than I had previously, and I saw more queer people involved than I had in the suburbs of San Diego. I also quickly discovered that it tended to be very single-issue, and it really didn't address a lot of things going on. I tended to be very disillusioned with punk, and I'm a very critical person, though not as critical as Iraya *(laughter)*. I also, like Gary, got into punk rock because I thought it was going to be a lot more political than it turned out to be. It was political around certain issues, like apartheid and nuclear war, but when it came to looking critically at all the internal hidden structures of race and gender and so on, I think that most people would agree that it reacted really badly, like to riot grrl, Because I was watching that going on it sort of colored my perception of how well queer and punk might actually get along, which was precariously.

Martin: For me, it's such a bizarre thing, because for me it feels like I have pieces of me in all these different places; being a man, being queer, being punk. In the mainstream gay community, I'm queerer than that, and in punk, I'm punker than that, you know? I think I've gotten to this point where I'm not even expecting shit from people. I'm just going to do what I fucking do. I think I took that attitude with my old band, and I don't care how people respond. I think that's the best, clearest, punkest thing somebody can do. I don't have high expectations, in a certain sense, of the punk scene—in lot of ways it doesn't (or maybe it's not meant to) talk to me—you know? Or you take what you want from it, just like anything. I'm going to put my part in it. In the mainstream gay community, there are the lines of race and everything—me and my boyfriend have been in the bar going, "this is a fucking mess," because we're both Latino and there's that whole issue. Or we're at this older gay man party and we're like, let's hang out and meet new people from around the neighborhood, and then it's like, "our property value isn't going up because of 'those people'," and we're part of "those people." It really gets ugly. And the punk scene. I feel like a very big part of it, but we kind of have a tough skin, when you stick it out and stick around, you just develop this skin and I'm just kind of

one of those people.

Mimi: Your body is a callous. *(laughter)*

Martin: It is! Exactly. You know, where at fests and shows people talk about the safe space—my whole fucked-up mentality is, any fucking space I walk in is Latino, it's queer, it's whatever...

Iraya: It's what you bring wherever you go. We transform space wherever we go. That's the whole idea—to take over.

Mimi: I really like the idea of bringing what you are into spaces. That way your presence can be a pressure point. It can make that space "unsafe" for those who don't want you there. I think that in some ways, pushing the boundaries of what punk rock does or does not entail is really important.

Ace: Going into a place and making your presence known—whatever space it is, whether it be the grocery store or the show...

Mimi: Although sometimes, I think for your own mental health you have to not go and be...

Iraya: "On" all the time!

Aaron: For me, I feel like I have a small community of people that I know and feel comfortable around all the time. There are certain spaces I feel comfortable in. A lot of times I'll go to a show at, like, Mission Records, and I'll feel super alienated and can't deal with being there, and then there are other times when I'll go there and it'll be super rad and I'll have a great time. And sometimes, I'll go into a queer space and I'll be alienated by what's going on there. And I have no idea what my place is there or even if my place is supposed to be there. That's why I feel like I have this certain group of people...

Aaron: It kind of sucks that you limit yourself to that a lot of the time, but there's only so many times you can put yourself out there and deal with that.

Susan: As far as I relate to and define punk rock, it totally fits the being queer thing for me, though obviously it doesn't for others. Punk rock is such an amazingly diverse kaleidoscope of politics, sex, gender, and race. Obviously it's something that everyone defines for themselves, and there are people in the punk scene—which is supposedly this open minded thing—that hate our guts for being queer, and will put that in song lyrics or will just give you stares at shows. Fortunately, in the Bay Area we're somewhat insulated from that. If you look at the roots of punk rock and gay men in the City, going back to when it started here, for example, the Stone was one of the first places that had punk shows in the City. It's weird how they've always had this connection, how there's always been queer and openly gay men and women involved in punk from day one. For me, it's always been a safe space. People have always treated me like gold in the punk scene, and I love it. I really have to hand it to the punk scene in the Bay Area. For the past ten years that I have been living here, it's been a very welcoming and rewarding thing to be out as queer and transgendered.

Martin: I think it's *out* of the Bay Area where there's some issues... *(laughter)* I tell you, this is the first town where I came out at a show. It was the Bay Area. I had never been "out" at show before, in Crudos—and Chicago was the *last* place I came out.

Gary: Why was that?

Martin: I was terrified.

Iraya: It was your hometown...

Martin: Yeah, you know, it's like, the 'hood... The first place I came out was here in San Francisco. You know, I remember coming to shows here and I saw queer kids all over, and it wasn't even taboo. You say "queer" in other cities and they're just like, "what?" The last place I came out was in Chicago, because I was so afraid at what would happen. The war would have been at home, if it was going to happen. I knew that it was going to be a bit tricky for me. I think that you brought up a great point, Susan. You hear about the origins of punk and how it was very queer—I just want to bring all that back.

Mimi: What do you think happened to it? Where did they all go?

Martin: The 80s! *(laughter)*

Aaron: They got assimilated, like everything else.

Mimi: They all moved to the suburbs. *(laughter)*

Martin: Yeah, yeah—it all got very very weird. I think that people like us are doing that, though. I think that there's a lot of people out there that are really challenging things. When you've got people talking shit on you and hating you, a lot of the time it's because you're doing something right. And this mentality that the punk scene tends to have—that we are this higher force of knowledge and we know it all because we've heard it all and we've read the lyric sheets—I think that we really are the people who are challenging that and saying "no, we don't know it all." None of us really do. When you have these people criticizing things, *people*, for being queer, saying, "what's the big deal—why are you always talking about women's things? Why are you always talking about queer things? Why people of color things? Why this thing? Why that?" I like that, that we're doing what we're doing. We're not hiding in some punk closet—fuck that. That doesn't exist. For some kids it does. Not everyone is at this level that we here are—some kids are in the closet—we're definitely not. I think the presence is important.

Aaron: I think that is a super important thing, in that being queer and making music is having that presence, because god knows, when I was 14 and living in the Midwest there was so little of that. There were a select few bands that I didn't really identify with at all, either because they were really, really sexual—which I was not even close to at that age. Songs about giant dicks...it just wasn't something I was really ready for at 14...

Martin: Can I borrow *that* record? *(laughter)*

Aaron: I certainly wish that there had been bands like Limp Wrist when I was 14, you know? I think that is the biggest thing—that there be a presence like that of people who are queer and transgendered and just out there. People need to do it regardless of the boundaries or limitations or expectations that have been set up for how you're supposed to be. God knows, I've been so frustrated and just said, "fuck this" so many times, but then I think about it and I still wanna do this. Nothing's changed, and we need to keep the dialogue going as long as there are people still getting abused at shows or whatever because they are queer or transgendered.

Gary: I think when you're talking about limitations and boundaries, the queer punk scene tends put up a lot of those too. In my old band with Iraya, I think it was really smart that we would try to play with, you know, hip hop groups and performance artists and spoken word, and anything radical and interesting, as opposed to what I see all the time, where it's like, "here's the queer punk show," and you know what to expect, and there's not much coalition building going on.

Ace: Exclusiveness.

Gary: Yeah. That's why I'm a hermit now and I don't really go to a lot of shows. There was a huge queer hip hop show at the Oakland Pride this year—it was huge, there were like 20 groups listed. That needs to be recognized, and connections need to be built.

Aaron: The other thing I'm talking about is limitations, too—about what punk is. I've claimed the name "punk" for a long time now. I think there's an idea of what punk is, at least what I cut my teeth on. When I was coming up in the early 90s, people were challenging that notion. When I went out of playing guitar rock, people were like, "that's not punk," but to me it was—who cares if you're using a drum machine or keyboards or whatever? It's still punk music to me. I think there's a lot of hip hop too that is very punk in attitude.

Martin: There's parallels between the two. As a flip side to what you're saying, since we are talking about music and sound, there's been a lot of queer punk—and props to the many, many, especially the women bands, who really tackled a lot of stuff—that really talked about gender and things that were really important and really mattered to me and a lot of people, but I also felt like a lot the stuff that was happening that was called "queer punk" was not talking to me in another way—as far as what I liked in music. I thought that "queer pop" was a lot of what was happening, but where was the punk? Where was the edge? I'm into these abrasive sounds, and for me, that's the reason we started the band that I'm doing now. We wanted to have those queer politics and be tackling all those issues, but we wanted to fucking punk out! We wanted this really nice, rough sound, because I can think of younger kids who are into hardcore punk and then they hear some of the bands that are more pop, they're going be like, "this doesn't sound punk." In spirit and attitude, yes, it is punk, and I'm 100% behind it. But esthetically, and in the music, it wasn't punk for them. I think there's a lot of parallels between hip hop and punk. I came from an old hip hop scene and went into punk, so I've seen the cross. I grew up on that stuff. I'm really critical of that too, though. I've met many people who are like "fuck punk, it's bullshit—people are all fucked up." But you know, you're not going to find paradise in the hip hop scene either.

Iraya: It's very complicated. I mean, the first hardcore show I ever went to was like DRI and NOMEANSNO—high drama at the On Broadway. It was all of these angry white guys, and I stood on a chair watched a pit and bobbed my head. I mean I liked some of the songs and stuff, but I I'd be like, "I don't know if I really like this scene, so I'm going to just go home and listen to Prince." *(laughter)* But I also listened to stuff the Minutemen, too. I would listen to all of these things. I really didn't get into the punk rock "scene" until I joined the *Maximum Rocknroll* cult (tee-hee). I'd went to a Gilman St. show, and I saw the Beatnigs. They were like my favorite band, and it was a Rock Against Racism show and the audience was like 65% kids of color, which was really radical for 1988, and I was like, "wow, all the shows are like this?!" and

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then I'd go to another show there and be like "where'd all the people go?" I think especially now I do feel like I am an ex-punk. I own who I am, but ten years ago being involved in Dyke of Color stuff and Women of Color stuff and also listening to punk rock... people were really freaked out by you. There wasn't this overlap of identities that is sort of recognized now. That's why, like in (Martin's) video about all the Latino punk bands, those were the bands I was obsessed with, like the Bags...that was what I got out of punk rock. For other people, it's a whole other animal. I do think people need to look at that—that it can be very small, very exclusive. I do think, now, that queer/dyke punk is seen as what is really "now" and radical and happening in queer culture. The straight "punk scene" or whatever is still really freaked about it. But the "gaystream," they also sees it as another commodity and it's taken its place among the gaystream.

Ace: I used to just listen to punk on vinyl at home, and then my cousin took me to a punk rock show and I loved every bit of it, the energy. I was pissed, and they were pissed. It was my first show, so I was sitting on the floor and I got trampled, but I got up. I kept going to shows, and then when I started "discovering myself"—my sexuality—I was like, I'll venture out to other things, like hip hop or a queer show that's kind of acoustic. But there wasn't that edge; I didn't enjoy an acoustic show. I'd think, but I'm supposed to be feeding into this, it's queer. I was always going back and forth, trying to find it. I still do; I don't only go to punk shows, but that fucking edge is still there.

Iraya: There were so many queers in the early days, and there were so many layers of gender fuck. There was tons of tyranny stuff, and dykes and fags, and you know, queer straight people. So when punk became appropriated, all this queer stuff got filtered out, without being documented, like the *Spin*, "25 Years of Punk Rock." It's all angry white boys, there's no mention of riot grrl.

Aaron: There are so many amazing queer bands that I never knew about until recently, like the Screamers, Catholic Discipline. I saw a video of Nervous Gender and I was like, why haven't I known about this band? They're fucking amazing.

Mimi: In talking about the history, too, I think it's really important to recognize that there was a strain of homophobia happening at the same time, in reaction to the fact that there were so many queers in punk rock. All those anti-disco songs were really coded attacks on urban blacks and gay people. The history of the anti-disco sentiment is really connected to the homophobia that has been a part of punk rock since the beginning, but it's also connected to the fact that there were so many queers in punk rock at the beginning.

Iraya: Which is why a straight guy would be dressed like a punk rocker and someone would say, "You faggot!" and he say, "I'm not no faggot!" But well, you kind of *are*. Where do you think the name *punk* comes from?

Martin: A lot of kids don't know where the name came from. We're punks, you get punked! A lot of kids don't know that this is the second MRR dedicated to queer stuff. There was one that came out a while back.

Susan: The punk scene was infiltrated by so many queers and was so intrinsically queer at the beginning, and then—I say this as a fan of early 80s hardcore, which is my favorite, favorite music in the world—and lot of the machismo did chase the queers away, and the women, and the whole thug thing took over, with bad attitudes and violence.

Gary: Sometimes I'll go to support my friends of color in their projects that they're doing. We've talked at our shows about the weird appropriation of names and thing like that, and how it's the responsibility of white people to talk about these things with each other.

Aaron: I think that things need to be more diversity shows in general, as far as bands that play together. I'd like too see some mixture in the lineups of shows. Talking about the responsibility of us educating other white people. I think that's so important.

Martin: In the punk scene, we are highly critical of ourselves, and I think that's good. I also think we have high expectations, we want a lot from it, and I think that's fine too. I don't know if we would call it unity or anything. Even us, here, do we know each other? No, we're just having these discussions. Putting a label on it like "queer punk," people think OK, here's this subgroup, the queer punks. Do they run along with the regular punks? It starts getting fragmented.

Aaron: There's so much more to my identity than those two things.

Ace: We're in boxes with only three walls. There's an open wall. Ha ha.

Susan: Like we're a separate queer punk scene, or are we part of a larger whole. I love the idea of your band, being the poison in the machine. That's what punk rock is about, confrontation.

Iraya: Sometimes I feel like the confrontation idea—everyone has different points of power and privilege that they can use. Like, you're Latino, but you're also male; you're queer, but you don't appear to be so femmy to the naked eye on the street all the time. Being like an Asian-mix dyke, and growing up in San Francisco in the 80s, it was like, "those snotty white kids are the punk rockers, I don't like them." It was a whole other relationship I had with that. And being Filipino, and all these punk bands played at the Filipino club, but then they didn't really like Filipinos; what does that mean? The whole idea of confrontation in punk rock is so complicated. I feel like I did that for so long in Sta Prest, and it was like, let's talk about gender, but race? You've crossed the line, you make us so uncomfortable.

Mimi: I cross that line a lot.

Martin: You get that everywhere. The world is not ready to take it on. I wish queers would just raid straight-up fucked-up crazy-ass shows, and just have an all-out make out party. Just take over.

Aaron: Sometimes I feel that's what I already do in life.

Martin: The make out party? *(laughter)*

Aaron: I wish. Going into that space and being myself. Sometimes people say they didn't know I was queer, and I feel like because I'm in that space, at a hardcore show, I'm immediately excluded from that category.

Ace: I was at this show in Oakland, and I got, "What are you, boy or girl?" and I thought I was going to get my ass kicked, and I was totally scared. It's an everyday confrontation. I just started teaching at this high school, and people are like, are you going to go by Ace, are you going to be Mr. Morgan? Mrs. Morgan? I'm gonna go by Ace, but if they wanna call me Mr. Morgan, I would love that. But a lot of people don't get that, in a lot of scenes, not just the punk scene. Try to tell my mom that. But going into this classroom situation, I was totally nervous. But it's nice to have places that are like a buffer zone, when you've been so uncomfortable for so long.

Gary: Even though politically and idealistically I'm totally an integrationist, there's something to say for having our own shows—the feeling of solidarity.

MRR: As a closing thing, what would you like to see people get out of this?

Aaron: I think that MRR has the potential to be such an incredible resource—something like this is going out to tons of kids. Getting this group together and exposing these ideas, that's the best purpose for this, to me.

Martin: Another angle we didn't touch on is a lot of people in punk, especially younger kids, are afraid to say the word "sex." It's a part of what we all are. There's a lot of barriers we are still dealing with. There's still a sternness at hardcore shows. To queer up the scene, there has to be more happening, but people in the scene are still afraid of it. I think the fact that this is coming out is a great thing; it's a step.

Susan: Especially when you're a young teenager, and you get into punk rock—kids are all pumped up about sexuality, and some queer punk walks into the scene, they freak out. But maybe if they get to know me, that can be an incredible outreach. I can think of several kids, where I think I've really make a difference in their perception. I think we all do that when we go to shows—let's keep it up.

Mimi: I really appreciated something about this discussion, which is what we've talked about hasn't been single-issue, and that we haven't just talked about queerness. The way our discussion branched out into looking at issues of gender and sexuality and race and class and all these kinds of things at once is really important. I think it really emphasized the fact that these aren't isolated, discrete categories, like cans in a cupboard that just sit next to each other, that we can deal with one at a time, but that it's a very complicated amalgam of so many things that make up all of us that need to be dealt with.

Martin: I just thought about something very interesting. A lot of people that I knew who came out of the closet, they did it after they left the scene. There's been people in the hardcore scene that were shitting bricks and wouldn't do it until they totally abandoned it and walked away, and I see why. It saddens me that people feel that way. Like Mimi, said, all of these dynamic things really *are* who we are, and I just wish kids who read this think, you do not have to walk away from something to be something else. You can do it all at once. What the fuck?

Iraya: I wanna say, I loved talking about all of this stuff, even though of course I have all my issues and my irritation with punk rock, but also, I really feel like when I was younger, it helped save my life. It really helped me a lot. Everyone has to find their own path. MRR has had a lot of homophobia over the years as well, so this is an intervention. It's so problematic, but you still have to do what you have to do. There's so much you have to keep pushing to change and transform.

Gary: And learn to not hate yourself, to love yourself, at the same time.

Aaron: Like you're not supposed to be a loving person, because it takes away from you toughness or something. That's all bullshit.

Susan: Punks are supposed to be such self-actualized individuals, but so many punks are obviously so self-repressed anyway, and aren't even being true to themselves. That's a great reason why punk kids should go to whatever show, or whatever part of society away from the punk scene they want to, and hopefully we can set the example.

Ace: I think It's great this happened. I think it's completely important.

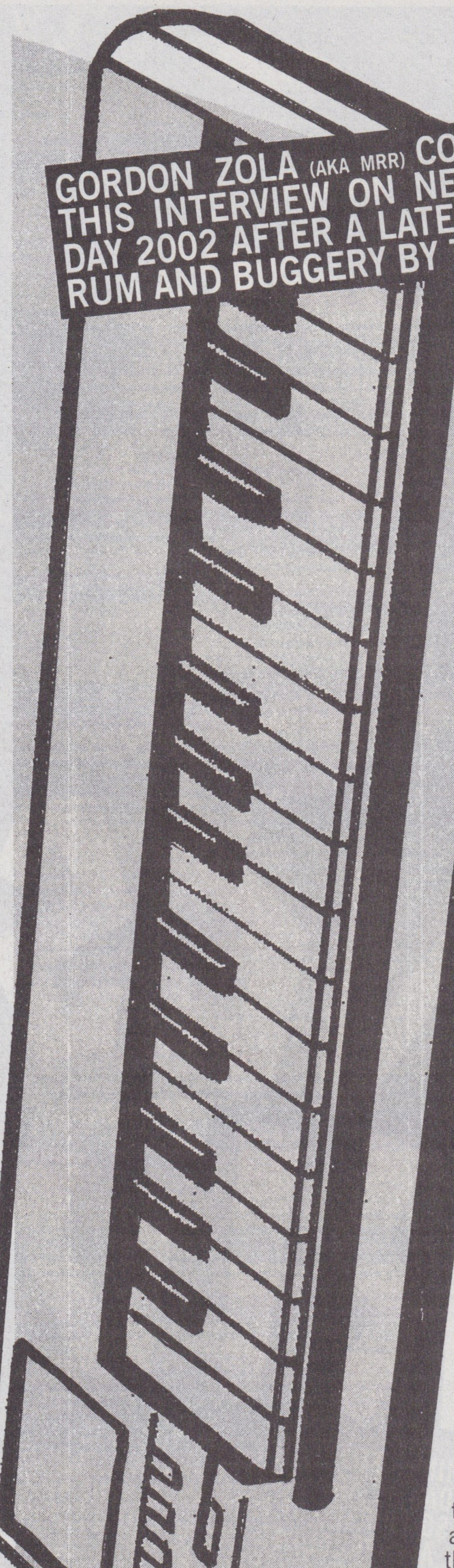
Martin: Oh, and I wanna know—does Henry really have the 10 1/2?

Who the hell are these folx anyways? Well Martin sings for a band called LIMP WRIST. Gary Fembot is in FEELINGS ON A GRID. iraya was in STA-PREST and is now in BODY STOCKING AND TIGHTS. Ace takes lotsa awesome photos. Susan does People Under No King (P.U.N.K.) fanzine and takes rad photos too. Aaron sings for GHOST-HIPS and used to be in THE LITTLE DEATHS. mimi does the zines SLANDER and WORSE THAN QUEER.

FEELINGS ON A GRID

FEELINGS ON A GRID ARE A DRUMS/KEYBOARDS/VOCALS DUO REMINISCENT OF THE LATE 70S ARTSY, ELECTRONIC, SF PUNK SCENE. DM FEELINGS (DMF) SINGS, PLAYS KEYBOARDS, AND IS A FORMER MEMBER OF BAY AREA BANDS STA-PREST, HARRIS FLUSH, AND THE SERENAS. DM ALSO WORKED AT EPICENTER ZONE FOR MANY YEARS, HELPED FOUND Q-TIP (QUEERS TOGETHER IN PUNKNESS), AND PRODUCED THE AMAZING EARLY 90S ZINE *FEMBOT*. LE GRID (LG) PLAYS PERCUSSION AND KEYBOARDS, CONTRIBUTES VOCALS, AND IS A MASTER MANIPULATOR OF SOUNDS MADE BY MISCELLANEOUS GARAGE SALE PURCHASES. HE IS ALSO AN AMATEUR BUILDER OF RECOMBINANT ELECTRONICS. THE FEELINGS BOYS ARE ALSO MAKING A SCI-FI MOVIE CALLED *THE VERMAPORT*, WHICH SHOULD BE DONE ANY YEAR NOW. FEELINGS ON A GRID HAVE BEEN DESCRIBED AS THE SHAGGS COVERING YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS, GARY NUMAN, AND THE SCREAMERS AT THE SAME TIME.

GORDON ZOLA (AKA MRR) CONDUCTED THIS INTERVIEW ON NEW YEAR'S DAY 2002 AFTER A LATE NIGHT OF RUM AND BUGGERY BY THE BAND.



THE GRID GUYS ARE BUSY BOYS. THEY ARE PLANNING A SAN FRANCISCO CABLE ACCESS TV SHOW ON CHANNEL 29 AND THEY WILL HAVE A SONG ON A COMP BY AKIKO AND ROP CALLED "ARE FRIENDS ELECTRIC?" AVAILABLE SOON FROM SEIZMIC RECORDS (PO BOX 150491 BROOKLYN, NY 11205-0491 OR ONLINE AT DOUBLEDAREYA.NET). AN ALBUM IS PLANNED BY THE END OF 2002, BUT FOR NOW YOU CAN GET THEIR DEMO TAPE FOR $5 FROM PO BOX 421912, SF, CA 94142-1912 (IT HASN'T BEEN OUT OF MY STEREO IN WEEKS!) ALSO, GARY'S OLD BAND STA-PREST (NOW STAY-PRESSED FOR LEGAL REASONS) HAS A COMP OF THEIR UNRELEASED MATERIAL DUE OUT SOON. YOU CAN GET INFO AT STAYPRESSED@HOTMAIL.COM OR AT THE FEELINGS ON A GRID PO BOX. FEELINGS ON A GRID CAN BE REACHED AT FEELINGSONAGRID@YAHOO.COM.

MRR: How would you describe your music?

DMF: We're not lovers. Let's get that on record right away.

MRR: What made you start a band? What are you trying to accomplish?

DMF: Our common musical influences and our political interests were a starting point. As far as the punk scene goes, I wanted to address the fact that punk politics are usually limited to one issue or no issue at all. The punk and queer punk scenes are supposed to be radical subcultures, but they're not really.

LG: In the band, we try to address racism through this sort of model that our friend Iraya nicknamed the "white on white." This basically entails white people educating, questioning, and dialoguing with other white people about issues that are really our responsibility. Rather than bowing out of the process or calling another white person out because of something that person says or carries around as a false assumption, we try and bring those topics up effectively so they can get dealt with. Hopefully two weeks down the road or something, a person of color doesn't have to put up with hearing or seeing that same person and having to explain again why such and such is the way it is.

DMF: It's a lot different than the "I'm working on my racism" pose of the 90s "underground punk" movement. Plus, it covers ground that emo and even riot grrrl weren't addressing! Besides, we were just sick of hearing people say stupid shit at shows.

LG: It's basically a musical vehicle to get across things we try to communicate in our daily lives anyway. The fucked up fact is that being a white person doing something creative/artsy in this society right now still generally means that most media outlets tend to give you the floor to express yourself more readily. We feel like if that's how that bullshit is going to be operating, then we'll do our best to utilize whatever time we can get wisely to focus attention on things we feel are important. Like building respectful alliances with communities of color and getting discussions going with other white folks about the false histories we're taught and the privileged options we're offered in life, some of which are in proportion to how much money we make a year.

MRR: In The Cooperative, we mostly dealt with class issues. Do you feel certain issues define your band?

LG: Race, class, gender, and sexuality matters. Anything we think is important which is usually permeated by those first four topics, like the war, for example. We try to cite what our background is so that people can judge how it affects what we're saying and who we are. We're both working class. He's a fag; I'm bi, though I identified as 100% homosexual for a number of years. We're white.

DMF: We work at non-profits.

LG: Class awareness is definitely something that comes up in most things we do.

DMF: It's just important to remember that it's not the only important issue.

MRR: How has your message been received?

LG: I'm not sure how we could really gauge that. Maybe we should hand out surveys. I've been approached a couple of times by folks who heard us and said they were glad we talk about what we talk about. At the 949 Market show I heard a lot of cheering when DM was talking about "Matlocks."

DMF: We have a couple of people now who are like cheerleaders for us when we talk about those issues. And we hear people going "Yeah!" When we played in LA we had a discussion about the 9-11 bombing and one guy was like, "I've got people in New York." We just said, "We think the government response is really scary."

MRR: You use the term "Matlocks" in your printed information and in one of your songs. Are you talking about Glen from the Sex Pistols or Andy Griffith's lawyer character?

LG: No.

DMF: Trustafarians: white people with pseudo-dreads. It seems there's a lot of white people who don't have knowledge of the cultural, religious, and historical significance of dreadlocks, but try to sport them anyway. They're also trying to get their hair to do something it usually wasn't made to do and their hair is just kinda matted. Therefore they are "mat"locks. It's called appropriation!

it's a happening event. No one stands around with their backpacks on and arms crossed. Why are your shows different?

DMF: Theatricality, unitards...

LG: It's where explosive flamboyancy meets political urgency...

DMF: ...and we have groovy wayout tunes.

MRR: Do you see yourself as part of the punk scene?

LG: We don't really see us as being in any one scene, but maybe that's wishful thinking. We both definitely have backgrounds relative to the punk scene. And that's a lot of who mostly seem to come to our shows. Which is good in one way right now, since there's a lot of people in that scene who we think might benefit from taking part in types of conversations we want to have.

DMF: But we definitely wanna play benefits and any show where there's the opportunity for cross-cultural interaction with different styles of music. Our first show was a benefit for our building (The Redstone Building, formerly the SF Labor Temple) where tenants have been trying to take control of the building and buy it so we don't get evicted. A lot of labor and neighborhood activists were there.

MRR: DM, in your previous band, Sta-Prest, you played a lot of diverse shows with hip-hop and electronic bands like Qwest, Kofy Brown, etc. Do you see that happening with Feelings on a Grid?

DMF: I'd love to play with Elitrea and Kali, they're great. We'd love to play with Deep Dick Collective. Also Bodystocking + Tights (with Iraya from Sta-Prest and Akiko from Semiautomatic). There aren't many opportunities to play with people playing different styles of music than us because shows are really segregated. We want to showcase all kinds of music and performers on our cable access show we're putting together.

LG: I'd love to have a discussion about that with people. It seems like when those Sta-Prest shows were happening, it was a really great collaboration for those shows to come about but then during the shows a lot of people just came for some music and left and other people just came for other music and left.

DMF: I think people aren't really used to it. There are lots of people out there with eclectic tastes, but since stuff doesn't happen on a continual basis, it never really gets off the ground.

LG: When we're talking about playing with other types of bands and folks of color, we want to be clear that we're talking about a true, respectful collaboration, not just a weird, unrealistic production scotch-taping our music onto another scene. We're not talking about Eurocentric socialists going door-to-door in Hunter's Point asking people if they've met Karl Marx. In some electronic music scenes there are some real collaborations going on, and I'd like to see Feelings on a Grid have a niche more in that direction where we can interact with other styles of music.

MRR: Your band is called Feelings on a Grid. Are you an emo band?

LG: No. After seeing bands around the SF scene for years we asked ourselves, "Where do emotions properly reside?" And we decided they should reside on a grid. That's where they should be.

DMF: Emo's feelings are too nebulous.

LG: We wanna take the raw, undirected emotions of emo and mechanize them and turn them out on a computer with a randomized number generator.

DMF: We're Shemo.

LG: Shut up! That's a real band.

MRR: You've been in the punk and queer punk scenes for a while. What's the state of queer punk?

DMF: Well, I loved all the Riot Grrrl and queer punk stuff in the early 90s, but now it feels like it hasn't gone forward. Maybe I just don't keep up enough.

MRR: Maybe you need to read the Queer issue of MRR.

LG: I don't think there has been a whole lot of continuity between the queercore scene of the early 90s and some of the young queer punky types around now, which is probably why this issue of MRR might do some good.

MRR: Anything else?

LG: Feelings on a Grid is just pretty damn tired of European avant garde, punk, freaky, underground what-have-you elitism and mind-control. Why should young caucasoids be reading Burroughs and acting like archaic anarchist blather from the 1800s still has any relevance in today's society? It's time to step aside and support People of Color in their political and cultural endeavors and to build true coalitions.

DMF: Sometimes our white peers express shock that there are viable underground and aboveground radical movements afoot among People of Color. The majority of people in California and the world are People of Color. So get global and get with it.

Aaron Detroit, former vocalist for The Little Deaths, and current member of dark-wavers Ghosthips,

Aaron: So your zine was called *Girl Fiend*?
Cookie: Yeah, you never heard of it? It was really famous! (laughter)
Aaron: I mean, I've read your zine before, but I think that's funny, cause I had a zine that was called *Boy Crazy*. So you were a girl fiend and I was boy crazy.
Cookie: That's crazy: but I didn't think of it as so much as "fiending for girls," cause when I did it, I wasn't actually even going out with girls or anything. I thought of it as "fiend" as opposed to "friend"— "fiend" the noun , not the verb.
Cookie: So what are we gonna talk about here?
Aaron: I don't know, I don't have an outline or anything! (laughter)
Cookie: Well, why do you think it's important for us to do this? Well—I mean, can we diss on *Maximum Rock 'n' Roll* in *Maximum Rock 'n' Roll*?
Aaron: Why not? It's for the queer issue, and we're stating our views. The punk rock community is still allowed to have dialogue, right? I'm not censoring myself.
Cookie: I never read *Maximum Rock 'n' Roll* anymore, I don't feel it has much to offer me, except for maybe an article about my band. (laughter)
Aaron: I haven't had much interest in it at all until recently. I grew up in the Midwest, and it very rarely talked about what was going on around me, as a queer punk boy there. I would get an issue sometimes, because people made it out to be the punk rock bible. I'd read it, and it was just sort of alienating. I read it more now, when my friends' bands are in it. I live in California now, so it makes a little more sense to me.
Cookie: I used to read it all the time. I didn't have older brothers or sisters or anyone around me who was into punk. It was something I found out about myself. In the small town where I went to high school, there was this record store where I saw an issue of MRR, and I bought it. I didn't know anything about it. I would read interviews, and then I checked out bands that I thought were interesting. I got into a lot of cool stuff through MRR; I used to read the classifieds to find pen pals.
When the first queer issue came out in 1991 or 1992, I was super-excited, because I was first coming out. It had Tribe 8, who I think I had heard about already from an interview in the *Bikini Kill* zine, and stuff from Matt from Outpunk. I think I started writing him right after that. It also had Pansy Division and Donna Dresch. It's one of the only issues I still have.
Back to why we're doing this: Not many people I know read MRR anymore, and I wondered who was gonna be in their queer issue. I figured you and I could be in it if anyone's gonna be in it. We've both been actively doing stuff over the last few years.
Aaron: What you think about the fact that nine years ago "queercore," or being a queer band, seemed super important? Now there is less of a focus on that, we're just visible queers in bands..
Cookie: Not to generalize, but for a lot of people if you're just focusing on just this one part of your identity, it probably means it's the one way you're oppressed; and you're probably privileged in a lot of other ways, not always, but a lot of times. It's important to talk about being queer, but don't put the rest of your identity on the back burner. And we never identified with the term "queercore" anyway. The main bands that were identified with that label, like Tribe 8 or Pansy Division, I was never really into. I'm glad they're there, but we never related to them. I also don't feel like anything has moved backwards either.
Aaron: Yeah, I definitely feel that. I mean it's totally important for me to be out and talk about it, but there's so much other shit that I want to talk about. I feel like 2001 is 1981, with the super-fast advancement of technology, art damage, people doing lots of coke, all this nihilism. And it scares me, and I wanna talk about that and what my identity as a human being is. That's important too. So much of what was written about The Little Deaths was about our sexualities. They never asked much beyond that. Here we were given this opportunity to speak our minds, and they're asking me what movie star I have crush on? Come on! I wanted to say all these things, and I never got to. I didn't want to feel like a jerk and tell them to fuck off, but it was irritating. It got really boring just to talk about being queer all the time. How about asking the queer something else, and getting this queer individual's perspective?
Cookie: That would get really boring.
Aaron: Yeah. A phrase that got thrown around a lot then was "queer culture." I never thought about it really, until I was talking about it with a friend: The idea of stringing people together because of sexual identity is ridiculous. I'm alienated by most of what's out there. So I'm not feeling that at all. I feel really outside of that.
Cookie: How can anyone make a generalization about the interests or activities of millions and millions of people? Are they talking about people who shop in the Castro? People who listen to Ani Difranco? Or are they trying talk about really specific things that really specific privileged segments of the population are into? Terms like that are pretty pointless, because they can't really mean anything and they're trying to mean so much. Yeah, that doesn't work for me at all.
Aaron: I felt really alienated recently, going to meetings for a certain "queer punk" event. When trying to define the event, someone said something like, "I want this to be an important event for queer culture." I thought about it, and that sentence means nothing to me, because I don't know what that is.
Cookie: Yeah, Ugh. Okay, let's go back now.
Aaron: Back in time?
Cookie: Yeah! (laughter)
So were you punk first or were you queer first?
Aaron: Well, here we go, talking about our sexuality. (laughter) I was definitely queer first. But I was punk before I was out. I didn't know if the people I hung around with would accept it.
My first boyfriend, well I guess he was my boyfriend—The first boy I did it with, and hung around with, was sorta like a skater boy or whatever. He made me feel much more comfortable with that identity, being queer and punk, even though he was extremely uncomfortable with it and hid it a lot. But it made me feel like I wasn't a complete freak. Punk was the first identity I took on.
Cookie: Yeah, me too. I can't even really imagine it being the other way around. Not like me being queer is a part of me being punk, but I've always been queer through a punk filter, you know? I mean it just going hand in hand with mainstream lesbianism, not that I even identify as a lesbian, but just like mainstream politics or liberal politics. All the fucked-up things that go on, like lesbians being anti-tranny, or just really strict gender roles. I think I feel more comfortable at a mostly straight punk show than at a really mainstream gay type of event. Not that I'd be like "Oh great, I'm really happy that there's no one here like me!." I guess either way it's gonna be alienating.
Aaron: Yeah, I'm really alienated by both of those sort of things, "Pink Saturday" or a show at a super-punk venue like Mission Records. Three skinny straight white boys with tight pants, screaming, or a bunch of fags wearing Abercrombie and Fitch. I mean at the punk shows, it's not so much the straightness that I find alienating, but the male-dominated environment.

sat down with Cookie Tuff (AKA Christina) of Subtonix and "Girl Fiend" zine to discuss their current and past involvement in the queer punk community.

Cookie: Yeah, I don't hang out with "dudes." (laughter)

Aaron: So, Cookie, how did you get involved in all of this? Your music and zines?

Cookie: I grew up near New York City, but in a super-tiny country town. The summer after I finished high school, I started doing my zine, pretty much out of boredom. I had a lot of pen pals and I'd been reading a lot of zines, mostly ones inspired by Riot Grrrl or written by girls. It was such an accessible medium—most of them were quarter-sized and hand-written. They weren't intimidating to me at all. I'd talked about doing one with some friends, but it was gonna be more superficial. Like, "Oh you write a story about tattoos, and I'll write a story about bisexuality." (laughter) But my zine ended up being super-personal. I'd never had a journal, and I didn't really have anybody to talk to, so all the things that were going on in my head, my frustrations with hanging out with mostly straight people, not being out to my family, trying to meet other queers, all went into my zine. I gave it out to people at shows and sent it to pen pals. It was pretty easy to get your zine reviewed, so somehow I became "Christina Girifiend" which was really weird. A lot of people who do zines—zines done by one person, not big slick glossy ones— don't have anyone to talk to, or they have a lot of time on their hands, or they're total nerds. But you do a zine and all of the sudden you get some kind of notoriety, it's weird.

Aaron: It's a good communication device.

Cookie: Yeah. I only did that zine from like 1992-1995.

Aaron: That's a long time to do a zine though!

Cookie: I know. I did eight issues. One of them was a split with two other zines: *Kill The Robots* by this boy Jason, who was a fag from Maryland who went to school in Ohio, and this girl Vic. We had one big zine with the three of us. It was really great. I met a ton of people through doing that zine that I'm still friends with. It was cool, people would write to me and I was the first person they came out to.

Aaron: That's amazing. And now your here in San Francisco, reincarnated as Cookie Tuff, Subtonix's drummer extraordinaire.

Cookie: Yes, and I'm so much more glamorous then I used to be! (laughter) So what were you doing in Michigan, putting on Homocore Detroit shows?

Aaron: Well, my parents had moved into this gross town up far away from the city, and I was living with my grandparents in the city as much as possible. I was trying to meet more punk kids; I was meeting some but it was difficult for me. I had to randomly meet people at coffee houses or shows. I started doing this zine called *Swirlies* which helped me meet people but I was shy and felt dorky a lot of the time. I basically hung out with four or five people.

I can't believe I have to credit him, but I was sort of dating this boy for a while who will only now admit that we dated, after we didn't talk for five years. But, we started hanging out and I thought he was really hot. We liked the same music, and it turned out we went to the same Christian school together. That was the thing—we sort of knew each other, and I saw him at a record store one day. I bought a Babes in Toyland record. He was looking at a Minor Threat record, but he opted to buy a Smiths record instead. So I knew he was queer right away. (laughter) I was like, "That boy is really cute, and he's looking at really good records." Then I realized, oh my god, that's that boy from my grade school! So we talked and started hanging out. We kind of hooked up a little bit, and he started introducing me to these kids that weren't necessarily punk, they were more indie-rock. I didn't identify with that, I was really into punk and Riot Grrrl. But I was just happy to be around freaky kids. We hung out at this place called Zoot's in Detroit. It seems pretty awful looking back, but it was all that was there at the time as far as I knew. That's where I met Scott Berry, who started Homocore Detroit. He and I sort of became friends. When he decided to move to New York, he asked me if I wanted to take over Homocore, and I said yeah. It all became a big debacle, and after a while it imploded. But I did three zines for it, one with the boy from my grade school, and two by myself that like three people ever saw. I've thought about compiling stuff from all my zines and making a big zine-book.

Cookie: Was this before or after Homocore Chicago was happening?

Aaron: This was after. I'm guessing Scott was inspired by that. When Homocore Detroit popped up, all these other Homocores were popping up as well. Like Homocore Minneapolis, Christopher from Lucifag was doing that. I remember we set up this Chris Cochrane show. When he came through, he was like, "Oh my god, there's a Homocore Little Rock!" And The Third Sex said they were seeing more, too. We were freaking out, I felt like there was something cool going on.

This was the mid-1990's. But after a while I got alienated by that too. I guess that's all part of our evolution though. Things happen, and you grow and change.

Cookie: In the early-to-mid-1990's, things were pretty exciting. I guess it was the first time queer things were really pushed to the forefront and that was why. That's also when Riot Grrrl was first happening.

Aaron: I identified with Riot Grrrl more than "queercore." I always identified more with Bikini Kill than say, Pansy Division. Even before that. I got into Bikini Kill because of Babes in Toyland and Hole's *Pretty on the Inside*.

Cookie: I love that record. I was into those bands in high school before Bikini Kill was around.

Aaron: Babes in Toyland is one of my favorite bands to this day. They had a huge impact on me, along with L7 and Seven Year Bitch all of which weren't associated with Riot Grrrl at all. If you asked Elizabeth Davis if Seven Year Bitch was a Riot Grrrl band, she would say no. But they were really political; "No Fuckin' War" is so valid today with Dubya in the White House. That was what I was identifying within punk at the time. I was really into all those bands who were completely feminist and political, but I never heard things said literally until Bikini Kill. Hearing somebody say, "We're real, worse than queer," was exciting and empowering for me. Women always spoke to me more.

I wish there had been more visible queer boys at the time. Pansy Division was rad and all, but I was an angry angsty teenager who wasn't all that experienced with sex, so I wasn't totally identifying with them. I went and saw them open for Green Day back in, what year was that? I don't remember, but that was a scary and funny show. Jon told me it was their worst reception on tour, but they also had the most merchandise sales. Detroit is full of closet homos! Anyway, I remember when we set up a Homocore Detroit show for Suck Pretty, Chris Cochrane's band at the time, I was excited cause they were boys. But I never really found queer punk boys in bands. Man, I wish I could have seen a Limp Wrist show when I was 15!

Cookie: I've always found that people in general think that there's so many more queer men than women. In cities, there's always areas that are geared towards queer men, but I guess that has to do with living in a patriarchical and capitalist society. Who has money, who can have all those stores. But when it comes to

punk there's always been a lot more queer girls playing music than boys, it seems.
Aaron: When I was first starting to play music, that's why I wanted me being queer to be a big deal. I didn't see myself in anyone else out there; I wanted to communicate and meet people like me. That's a big reason why I play out, to meet people with similar ideals. That's how you and I met. But now, I also wanna talk about things that are important to me. And it's important for me to be political, because there was such a backlash against that. It's great when I see a band like yours, or others in our community, up there being political and fun and full of life. That's what I want out of music and that's what I try to put in mine. So many bands seem really apolitical now.
Cookie: It's gotten to a place where people don't talk about what their songs are about anymore. I wouldn't really give a fuck if somebody yelled at us, "Shut up and play!" But some people react negatively. We're making lyric sheets for our tour. I'm really excited about it, because before I've only really played drums, which I guess is a stereotypical dyke instrument. (laughter) But now that I'm singing, I'm really into talking about what the songs are about.
When we're on tour no one is going to assume I'm queer, so I wanna talk about it before this song we have called "Berlin: 1930" which I wrote after seeing the documentary about queers during the Holocaust, *Paragraph 175*. People aren't going to be looking at the me in make-up, high heels, and a little miniskirt and say, "Oh, that girl's queer." I wanna be visible and talk to people and hear people's reactions in towns where kids aren't used to hearing bands talk about being queer.

Aaron: The Little Deaths' US tour was really weird in that respect. In Philadelphia the kids responded most to that aspect of the band. That's not what I expected from Philly at all. But hell, I was wrong—there's tons of cute queer punk boys in Philly.
Cookie: Were there cute girls there?
Aaron: Um, my attention was elsewhere! (laughter) But, I met rad boys who played music. I met Andrew, who's in Limp Wrist, and this boy Myles who's in a project called Myles of Destruction. It was exciting to see other queer boys doing what I do.
Cookie: People are always talking about the "dyke scene;" what they mean by that is dykes in their twenties being creative who come from some sort of punk background. But when I talk to my fag friends it doesn't seem like there's a "scene" or a community like that. It's always different boys doing their own thing.
Aaron: It's an anomaly really to meet a boy like that. Sometimes I meet boys that are pure aesthetic and don't have the politics; I rarely meet a boy who has the politics. I get excited when I do.
Cookie: Why don't you talk about your new band.
Aaron: I started a new band sometime before the initial hiatus of The Little Deaths. I wanted to do something more faggy and more in line with my aesthetic now, as opposed to what my aesthetic was like eleven years ago. The Little Deaths was the kind of band I always wanted to be in when I was 14. And now I want to be in a band that sounds like Depeche Mode! So I'm in a band with two other I guess queer-identified boys. We have keyboards and drum machines, that kind of thing.
Cookie: I think our bands are at the forefront of the queer/freaky post-goth revolution!
Aaron: The post goth-revolution? I guess both of our bands have that going on, and we've got Clone, and The Vanishing. They're both doing that kind of thing.
Cookie: I mean, it all comes back to goth. It doesn't get much queerer than goth music!
Aaron: It doesn't! Goth, or death rock, is the mutant queer child of punk, anyway.
Cookie: A really sweaty shirtless slam pit is pretty queer too.
Aaron: Well, yeah that's pretty damn queer too. But think about some of the early death rock bands, like Christian Death. Look at Rozz Williams. Christian Death is one of the first American bands that was playing goth music. You had the LA scene with 45 Grave, Super Heroines, and Christian Death. Rozz Williams was so faggy, with his 16 year-old goth-fag poetry! You go back to what you know, we talked earlier about bands that influenced us, and for me death rock was right there.

Cookie: Look what we're listening to right now!
Aaron: Joy Division!
Cookie: I'd say early Siouxsie, Joy Division, and Christian Death are all major influences on my band.
Aaron: It's weird, I like really tough girl bands and really faggy boy bands!
Cookie: Subtonix are tough and spooky.
Aaron: That's a good way to describe you! Ghosthips is spooky, but we're accessible. We're spooky, but don't be afraid to talk to us cause we want to meet you! Especially all the handsome boys!
Cookie: That's totally how the Subtonix interview in MRR ended, "Don't be shy to say hi! Woot Woot." (laughter)
Aaron: Well, playing music is part of communicating with people!
Cookie: Of course. People are like, "Why do you wanna be some sleazy rocker dude?" But, come on! Like when I was growing up, there was some stereotype of a chubby queer rocker chick. It's rewriting some cheesy played-out story, but with a different character.
Aaron: As much as people don't think this it's true, I get incredibly introverted. It's a big tool for me to play music, to communicate with people. Going on tour is the best thing in the world.
Cookie: So how should we wrap this up?
Aaron: I don't know, there's so much more we could talk about.
Cookie: I wanted to talk a little about gender and roles.
Aaron: Oh, like assumptions about dress.
Cookie: Yeah. I used to think, "I'm a feminist and I don't need to shave or wear make-up." That's kind of where I was. Now I'm into dressing up and looking fancy. But it's not a specific gender role.
Aaron: I definitely meet fags who get kind of ridiculous, who are so macho, and act that way to prove that just because they're a fag doesn't mean they're not a man. And there's been weird instances, where because of the way I dress people assume I'm some straight boy, or I'll meet a guy and he thinks I'm some tough butch guy and I'm gonna take him home and rough him up. That's not happening. Sorry, I'm a big softy.
Cookie: Well, maybe you should stop wearing that black hanky in your back left pocket! (laughter)
Aaron: Start telling that to all the straight boys in San Francisco!
Cookie: I know. If there're any straight boys reading this who don't know about the hanky code, you should really read up on it. You can read about it, I'm sure, in any store South of Market.
Aaron: Or the more seedy leathery gay places in your town. We so need to talk about this!
Cookie: Right pocket means you're a bottom, left pocket means your a top. Do you know what that means? (laughter)
Aaron: I don't know how many times I've been at my job and I'll see some cute straight punk rock boy walk in and he's got some black hanky hanging out of his left pocket. And I'm like, if he even knew! Or maybe he does! (laughter)
Cookie: You never know!
Aaron: Another time, I saw this boy with a red handkerchief in his right pocket!
Cookie: He wanted you to fist him! (Much laughter)
Aaron: No, not me. Not my scene, thanks. I was like, "What?!" But I talked to him and he was a total straight boy.
Cookie: I guess they just think it's really AxI or something.
Aaron: (breaks into "Welcome to the Jungle"...)
Cookie and Aaron will be collaborating with fellow San Franciscan Kat Case in a one-off band called *Date with Disaster*.
cookie/subtonix: po box 426828, sf,ca 94142.

Interview by Stacey Queer.

The Sissies are composed of three kids from Bloomington, Indiana. They are self-motivated and sincere about politics and punk rock. The following conversation took place in the dressing room of a budget gay bar. We tried on wigs left behind by drag performers, and The Sissies shared their thoughts and stories.

MRR: First of all, introduce yourselves.

Hannah: I'm Hannah, and I play bass and sing a little bit.

J.R.D.: I'm J.R.D., and I play the drums.

Ali: I'm Ali. I play guitar, sing, and write the songs.

MRR: How did you start playing together as The Sissies?

Ali: Summer of '98 I met Hannah and this guy named Chris, who used to play drums in the band, and I started roadieing for a band they were in. Somewhere in the middle of the tour, Hannah and I talked about starting a band.

Hannah: I was sleeping in the loft (of the van), and when I woke up I said, "Hey Ali, do you want to start a band?" Ali was like, "Yeah, maybe we *should* start a band." It seemed real fun to do that after the tour.

Ali: Then we just started practicing and writing songs.

MRR: So, what are your musical influences?

Ali: Well, I guess it's kind of cheesy, but when I was little, I really liked the Beatles. I was influenced a lot by my mom because she was in bands; she played bass, sang, and she was a great songwriter. I guess it's kind of weird because we play pop punk but we don't really listen to it, like the Queers, or whatever. One of my favorite bands is the Replacements. I really like Team Dresch. So I guess I'm influenced by those bands.

J.R.D.: I like my friends' bands.

Hannah: I feel like I'm not influenced by other bands as far as how I play the bass. I like my friends' bands a lot. I'm just into a smaller music community—just meeting awesome bands.

Ali: A lot of times, when I get ideas for songs it's because I'm at a show and I hear a band playing, and I think, that sounds really good, I should try to do something sort of like that. Not that I'm ripping them off, but when I get ideas for songs, it's not from more established bands, it's usually just from bands I see.

the sissies

MRR: You guys seem to be very comfortable on stage and really into the music. I know you tour all the freaking time...

Ali: We tour a lot.

J.R.D.: It doesn't seem like we tour that much.

Hannah: Twice a year. Tour is really good. I get to meet a lot of awesome people that I otherwise wouldn't meet.

J.R.D.: People see us a lot. I guess seeing a band twice a year that's not from your state is a lot.

MRR: So, that's how you've gotten your fans?

Ali: I think it helps a lot.

J.R.D.: We keep harassing them and eventually they listen to us. We're going to be coming back here—you're not going to get rid of us, we're moving in!

Ali: You reach a small group of people the first time you play a town, then hopefully those people will buy your CD, and hopefully, the next time you come back to the town even more peo-

We also do a lot of crime..

ple will remember who you are.

Hannah: It's really fun touring, I do feel like we do it a lot because I'm in this other band, too. I tour one month with The Sissies and then I'm on the road with my other band. But it's a whole lot of fun. I really like traveling. I get to see the country a couple of times a year. It's great.

MRR: How was playing in Hawaii?

Hannah: It was great. We played two shows, and we were there for four days. And we got to hang out with our friends in xbxrx.

MRR: What were the shows like?

Hannah: They were pretty good. We played with this awesome band called Sorry and with xbxrx. I guess xbxrx influences me because they're this crazy band and they jump around. When I see them, I want to be all crazy on stage, but it's hard.

Ali: It's harder for us because we have to play and sing at the same time.

Hannah: But, there were about 110 people at each show!

MRR: Did you go to any beaches or do any touristy stuff?

Hannah: We swam every day! This really nice guy set up our shows there, and he let us borrow his minivan. So we got to drive around the island. It was so nice.

Ali: We went to so many beaches. I still have sand in my hair.

Hannah: We jumped off cliffs into the ocean.

MRR: With your recent release on New Disorder records, you took a political stance by selling it cheap. Is that something that you will continue to do?

Ali: Definitely. I think it's important to not rip people off by charging tons of money for CDs. So we try to sell them as cheap as possible.

J.R.D.: It would be weird to try to put out a really nice-looking CD when we put so little time into recording it.

Ali: We put time into it, but it is an 8-track recording.

MRR: Well, your first CD was recorded two weeks after you guys had been together. How did you record the new CD?

J.R.D.: Our friend, Perry, recorded it in Hannah's basement. He recorded it with no more than four microphones.

Ali: That's why it doesn't sound that great.

MRR: It's authentic, it's noisy.

Ali: It's good for what we had.

J.R.D.: It probably sounds a lot more like us than any kind of studio recording would.

MRR: How do you all write your songs? Is it a collective process, or do you take parts away and bring them back to the band?

Ali: The new album has been more of a collective process than the first album was. Then, I wrote the songs and, since I was living across the country from Hannah and Chris, I sent a tape of the songs to them, and they learned to play them from that. This time, some of the songs I wrote on my own and brought to the band. But for a lot of them, I came to practice with an idea of how a song would go, and we would just work with it. J.R.D. even wrote my guitar part for one of the songs.

J.R.D.: We definitely put our own stuff in it.

MRR: A lot of your songs have political content. You discuss class issues, and Ali, you write about queer issues. Were these things a common bond for you when forming the band?

Ali: I don't really know if that was the idea when we formed, but we're all pretty political in our lives, so that just kind of carries into the things we write songs about.

MRR: You've been described as "folk punk." What do you think about that?

Ali: I don't know if it really describes us, but I like it.

J.R.D.: Who said that?

MRR: The New Disorder Web site.

Ali: That Web site also says we never change our clothes. I guess we really don't that often.

Hannah: But that doesn't really describe our music.

Ali: I guess that we're kind of "folk punk", but we're definitely more "punk" than "folk".

J.R.D.: I bet if you took all of our songs and arranged them on acoustic instruments, they could sound like folk songs. But we're pretty loud.

MRR: So what do you all do besides play music?

J.R.D.: Break laws, sleep—

Hannah: —besides play music? Well, every day I try to find some new way to help out, to be politically active. Buffaloes are being slaughtered in Montana and J.R.D. and I went out—

J.R.D.: We put our foot down.

Hannah: We helped out with this organization called The Buffalo Field Campaign. It's in Montana, just outside of Yellowstone National Park. The last free wild buffalo are there. In the winter, they search for food outside of the park, on public land. The Department of Livestock (DOL) doesn't like the buffalo to be on public land. They think they could spread a disease called brucellosis to the cattle that graze there in the summer. So the DOL rounds up the buffalo with snowmobiles and helicopters, and many get hurt in the process. Then, they take them to capture facilities where they test them for brucellosis. If they test positive, the buffalo are shot or taken to the slaughterhouse. I think that is horrible. The buffalo and the cattle are never even on the same land at the same time, so how could the cattle catch this disease from the buffalo? And actually, most of the buffalo don't even have the disease.

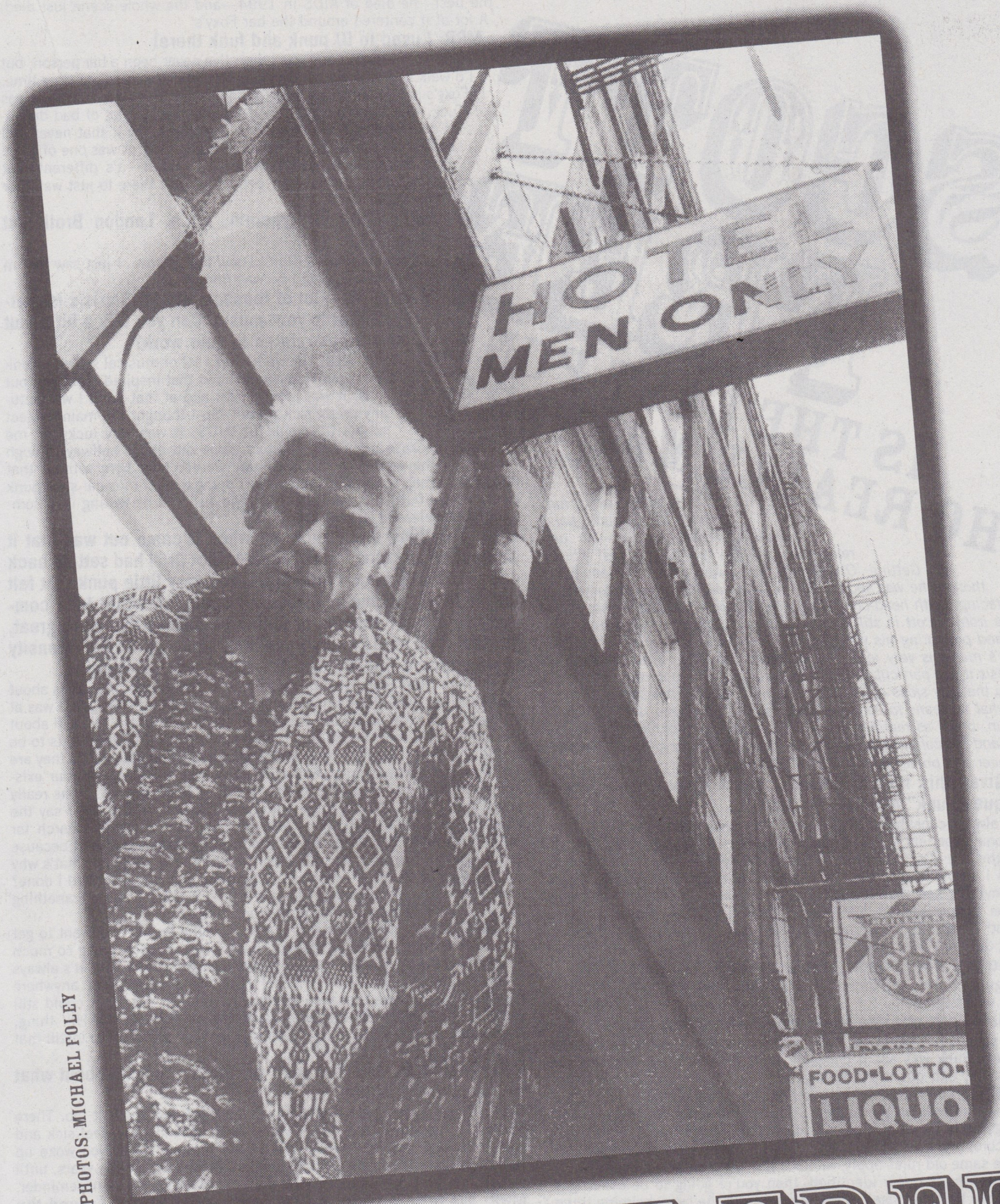
So basically, we watch the buffalo, and try to protect them from the DOL, and videotape a lot of the messed-up stuff that goes on. I hope we can save the buffalo, there are so few left.

When I'm at home, I do a lot of protests and political action. I also help out with Plan-it-X records.

Ali: We also do a lot of crime. We've been calling this tour the "Crime Does Pay" tour because we get away with everything; mainly stuff like stealing and scamming from corporations. But we won't go into details.

I also volunteer for the Midwest Pages to Prisoners Project, and at Secret Sailor Books, the anarchist bookstore in Bloomington. I go to work every once in a while, sleep, and ride bikes. We ride bikes a lot.

You can order and listen to The Sissies' latest release, *Look Back and Laugh,* at www.newdisorder.com; their first CD, *Geography,* is available at: http://go.to/planitx. www.bluemarble.net/~cory/sissies.html



PHOTOS: MICHAEL FOLEY

SCOTT FREE
IS THE LAST PUNK WHO REALLY MATTERS.

INTERVIEW BY MARK FREITAS.

SCOTT FREE

IS THE LAST PUNK WHO REALLY MATTERS.

Next to him every other punk band sounds earnest at best—no one really means it like this. Scott's first album, Getting Off—Scott Free was written when Scott thought he was soon to die of AIDS, and it is the statement of a man facing death head-on. Fortunately, the title has lost at least a little of its irony: Scott is still around and doing quite well, creating new music, and promoting his weekly Grinder performance series. The anger in Scott's music is very real, and for those who have lived through the AIDS crisis it has particular resonance. With extreme and rare candor, he digs into the ugly sides of gay life in a way that both celebrates and critiques what it means to be a gay male today. This music is not pretty, it is not fun, but it as real as you can get. Scott's unflinching portrayal of himself and his community, for me, is the very picture of what it means to be queer and punk. Interview by Mark Freitas.

MRR: Given this issue's theme, I guess I should ask, what does "queerpunk" mean?

Scott: I always considered queer and punk to be the same thing, from my personal experience. There was a split somewhere, but going through punk in the late 70s, I related to it because I was gay. That was the point at which I aimed in that direction—because it just made sense. There wasn't anything specifically gay being discussed in punk, yet I certainly remember people saying, "Oh Devo, they're gay." They meant it as an insult and Devo was a straight group, and yet, they were gay. Because anything different was "gay."

MRR: So you were coming out in the late 70s, early 80s?

Scott: I guess I came out around '81-'82, but I was into the punk scene from the very beginning.

MRR: How have straight punks dealt with queer issues?

Scott: It sounds terrible to say, but I sort of consider queer to be the ultimate punk. Punk was about choosing to be different and rejecting the norms, so gay and queer and transgender—well you can't do any better than that! But unfortunately there is this very male mentality in musical genres that the best is "the hardest." I mean the very term suggests that there is going to be an anti-gay stance. What is the hardest punk? Well, it's hardcore, and so that mentality doesn't adapt well with gender variance. The same old rules apply, where if you are seen with a queer record or someone who is queer identified, then you're going to be called gay. The power of being accused of being gay is still the overwhelming thing. So the gay, lesbian, transgender part of punk is really the underground of punk.

MRR: Which is pretty ironic since the early punk scene had a very gay sensibility, and it was a very open place for women as well. When I first met you, it was like 1992 and you were photographing Vaginal "Crème" Davis at a Homocore Chicago show at the Czar Bar for Robert Ford's Thing magazine—that was a pretty interesting period in the Chicago Scene.

Scott: I do not remember how I met Robert Ford. Thing was a black gay magazine—it was very pro-drag at a time when that was not very cool. It was a very smart, well-written magazine and I was doing photography for them. Robert was really good at creating a queer arts community. He was the best—he died of AIDS in 1994—and the whole scene just died. A lot of it centered around the bar Foxy's

MRR: I used to DJ punk and funk there!

Scott: That whole scene was great. I've never been a bar person, but I'd walk in and know half the people there. It was an amazing time. Foxy's just gave the bar over to the patrons. For instance, there was Tuck, which was London Broil's night. It was a lot of bad drag—he'd really make an effort to get people to try it that never had before. So that was my first time doing drag. It was one of there rare times where people were just into it—it's different that going to a bar or a show, people weren't there to just watch or to cruise.

MRR: Michael Hyacinth, a.k.a. London Broil just died...

Scott: Oh shit—I didn't know that. Damn. I just saw him in NY a year ago and he was fine.

MRR: For a lot of reasons, the AIDS crisis is pretty central to your music. Can you talk a bit about how it has related to your work?

Scott: Well, I've worked in a lot of musical styles. I think it was your Homocore shows that inspired me to put out a CD. It was around '96, and at that point I was actually pretty sick myself. So I thought the main subject of the CD would be AIDS. It was very lucky for me because protease inhibitors came out about halfway through recording the record. And I definitely wouldn't be here without that happening when it did. I actually wasn't doing a lot of musical-style punk at that time, but I was sure that the style I should be writing in. I completed and released Getting Off in '97.

MRR: The thing that struck me when it came out was that it was unlike any other punk records. Riot Grrrl had settled back down so really at that time there was very little punk that felt like it really meant it. It was all suburban white kids complaining about boredom, or taking on causes that were great, but that they really had no personal stake in. So the intensity of your record floored me—the anger was so visceral.

Scott: Yeah I was really angry about the whole situation. If punk is about being outcast, well there's nothing like laying in a bed everyday (I was at my parent's house) and watching TV and realizing that the TV is all about the ability to support the system through buying things, and efforts to be young and beautiful. When you are lying in bed dying you realize they are not there for you anymore. And they don't give a shit about your existence, and you don't count because you're on your way out. I was really angry that it took so long to be addressed. Reagan would never say the word AIDS, and '81-'86, there was no nationally funded research for AIDS. How many people died because of those four years? Just because of the environment that existed in this country towards gays—that's why this happened. So here I was, a thirty year-old guy, and what had I done? That was the main motivation for the CD—I wanted to have something accomplished in terms of music before I died.

Suddenly it put a whole life into a specific time frame—if I want to get this stuff done, I had to get going. That's why I've been doing so much since then. Because, even though things look good right now, it's always a huge question—suddenly Michael Hyacinth dies. It's not anywhere near over. I still have that feeling that I have to do this—this could still be it. I have lots of friends who haven't gone through the HIV thing, thank God, and they just sort of meander along. I just want to instill that urgency in them and it's hard.

MRR: Having to face that gave you better insights about what you wanted out of life.

Scott: It was a long period of time, that's the thing about it too. There was a long period of time where you'd wake up and you'd feel sick and you go to bed and you'd know that in the morning when you woke up you'd feel sick. That type of thing happening for two or three years, until I finally got an O.I.—pneumocystis pneumonia. It's a constant reminder.

MRR: We're in a weird period of the AIDS crisis. Around the time when your first record came out, I sometimes felt like I was becoming like my grandmother, reading the obituary page all the time. Now it's slowed, but it's still always there...

Scott: There was period there where we thought it was over—but it's not. I think the bareback explosion was inevitable. I could just feel people needing to have that "free" expression, wanting to reject condom use. The long-term effects of that are scary too—the new drugs aren't coming down the pike the way they thought. There are so many stories about people running out of treatment options. As well as heart attacks and liver failure from the drugs.

MRR: The way that gay people are treated growing up tends to create some very negative self-images. To what extent do

you think this leads to this sort of behavior? That sort of negative sordid side of gay life runs in your work as well.

Scott: I think that's a huge part of what goes on. The constant need to have some hot guy want you comes from low self-esteem. I think that is the legacy of our generation of gay men.

MRR: I think your song "Rejection" is an interesting commentary on that.

Scott: The idea for that song came from this guy I knew. I thought that we would be dating, but it didn't turn out that way. So, he's on the internet and the chat rooms are just starting up. When things would heat up he'd switch to the phone and it was just the worst, giving out your stats and stuff like that. And I thought, what have we come to? So I decided to write a song about going to a bathhouse and not rejecting anyone. It's pretty sick system we've set up of totally objectifying sexuality. One thing I can remember as a younger guy is being attracted to guys that were muscular. But we've been so inundated with that stuff, it's like they're ruined my attraction to that [laughs]. I have this silly vision of these perfect guys all touching each other, but being more into their own perfection—what would sex with them be like? Probably as boring as you could possibly get!

MRR: OK, how about another song? This one I love especially when you're performing on a straight bill and no one knows who you are. I love watching the audience's faces when they hear you yelling, "Yeah, I'm a faggot you wanna fight about it? This faggot could beat your fucking ass." You're pretty tall and built—so they know it's probably true!

Scott: [Laughs] Yeah I play with that. But it comes from a very harsh reality. It's the anger of just the constant threat of violence against us. And it's absolutely constant. I don't know how many young kids have gotten into my stuff, but I very often write from that perspective. For me the issue of being gay is mostly important as a young kid. That's when you have to deal with it. You're stuck in a world you cannot escape—a school, a family that you can't get out of.

MRR: And you have no idea what it means to be gay, and there's often no one to tell you.

Scott: One of the things that psychologically had an effect on me was an overwhelming fear of being exposed, super-paranoid. Fear of what would happen if I had to live the whole school year with people knowing, fear of what would happen at every corner, being made fun of, getting beaten up. I'd guess it's probably worse now. People are so aware now and everything is out of the closet. Back when I was growing up there was so little awareness that you could just sort of slide through, but now everybody knows and it makes it much more dangerous. I think MTV's "tolerance" is dangerous. They have a face of tolerance, but that fact is they have no openly gay performers in their videos, they have none. They're just at the level of feeling guilty about promoting Eminem, so they try to show they're tolerant.

MRR: And it's never treated equally, it's always a special interest thing.

Scott: It goes back to that fear of being labeled gay—that keeps record labels from signing openly gay artists. Because how many records are they going to sell if people are afraid to own it? So we stay in the underground.

MRR: It's interesting that a lot of the best punk acts, like Hüsker Dü, the Dicks, the Buzzcocks, have a gay sensibility, but because it's not obvious it doesn't affect them. But as soon as it's overt, you're a novelty act.

Scott: All I'm doing is just talking about my life and the things that affect me and gee, why are we not allowed to do that?

MRR: And a mainstream punk kid can sympathize with a billion different causes, but gay rights really aren't one of them.

Scott: Don't touch that one. Again it points to the fear—gay by association. If you hang out with gay kids are you going to be labeled as gay, and what does that mean?

MRR: And the consequences are real whether you're gay or straight. You're going to get shit. What's amazing about the new album, The Living Dead, is its stylistic diversity. Yet it is still very coherent. How did you pull that off?

Scott: I'm told it's the vocal. I was trying to make a point about queer music as being all styles. The first album was a punk AIDS album. On the second album I pulled older stuff in that didn't fit before.

MRR: What reaction have you gotten to your records and how hard have they been to promote?

Scott: It's been really hard. Initially the internet looked like it would be a really great opportunity to get exposure, but in fact there's no filtering—so it's eight trillion people putting stuff out on the web. It's a struggle to get exposure. I'm doing well locally, but that's it.

MRR: Sometimes it's hard to hear what the songs are about with a typical live punk set up. So like a lot of punks, you've started doing acoustic shows as well.

Scott: What I do is very lyric-based and it's very sarcastic and silly—and angry. So it's been a great thing.

MRR: How do you get in the place to write the kinds of songs you do?

Scott: Well I do push myself to write that way. I took this acting class once—and I found out I couldn't act [laughs]. But the instructor would always ask us "why"? The cliché thing about "what's your motivation." I think in my songwriting I often will do that. Before I sit down to write, I ask what am I taking about and why am I talking about it? Why am I feeling that—really trying to get to the deepest level of what's going on. And right at that moment [snaps fingers] a lyric pops out. And that's what I use. I definitely talk about things that are pretty embarrassing on a personal level. But I made a decision that I wanted to write really good stuff, and how else are you going to do it? Growing up it was the singer-songwriter genre that inspired me. People talking about what they honestly feel, that always makes the best music. But people just don't seem to use music in that way anymore.

MRR: So what's next for you?

Scott: Well I'd like to achieve a little more recognition. Just have a little more mobility. What I'm playing these days—like 80% is not recorded.

MRR: So any parting thoughts in terms of queers and punk?

Scott: The fear of being called gay is force we need to fight. Anyone that is punk should feel kinship to that because they've felt different—it's the exactly same thing. What people do in bed is irrelevant. How queer is punk? How punk is queer?

MRR: Or as G.B. Jones and Bruce LaBruce wrote long ago in J.D's—go look up "punk" in the dictionary!

For more information on Scott Free see his web site at www.scottfree.net or write him in care of Leather/Western Records, PO Box 11980, Chicago, IL 60611.

Interview by Annie Salerno

MRR: All right, what are your names, and where are all of you from?

Jill Arcade: I'm a Jersey girl.

Brina Thurston: Long Island.

Riley James: I'm from midcoast Maine. At night, the foghorns sang me to sleep.

Brina: We all washed ashore in NYC, a few years ago.

Jill: We had another guitarist named Christopher Depp, and another guitarist named Peter Kim, but…

Brina: they were seized by some unruly pirates and were forced to walk the plank.

MRR: What label are you on?

Brina: Several big name labels, which cannot be named, are currently looking at other bands so…

Jill: We are not on a label. A song of ours is on the most recent Mr. Lady comp, *Calling All Kings and Queens.*

MRR: Do you mainly play in the New York area, or are you touring at all?

Brina: Although we have sailed the seven seas, Navy has never toured on the main land.

Jill: We've played shows in NYC, at Bard College, and at Wesleyan.

Riley: I want to do a tour of coastal cities like Atlantic City, Boston, and New Orleans.

MRR: What are some of your favorite musicians and personal influences? What type of music do you listen to?

Jill: My main influence right now is Blonde Redhead. I'm also in love with Lispector and The Need.

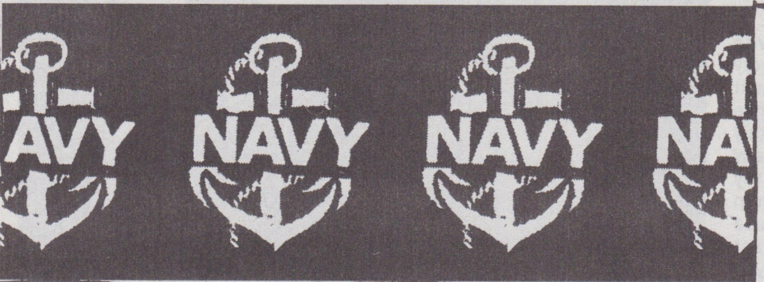
Riley: That's because at Bard, Radio admired Jill's guitar.

Jill: They let me sing with them at Dumba in NYC.

Riley: I really like Television, The Young Marble Giants, The Make-Up, and Jobriath.

MRR: Do you have a specific songwriter, or do you all write lyrics?

Jill: We usually write our individual specific musical parts and work on them in rehearsal. Riley writes the majority of the lyrics, but there are a few exceptions.



MRR: I noticed that the ocean is the theme in virtually every song on your record. Do you try hard to maintain this theme, or do you deviate?

Jill: We try to stay loyal to the sea, but recently we've strayed.

Riley: I think it's the ideal subject matter. You can make the ocean a metaphor for virtually anything, so we can make music about anything, while staying thematically consistent. Plus, there's no shortage of material on the ocean—songs, poetry, literature—to borrow from.

MRR: Why is the ocean a major theme in your writing? Were any of you ever in the Navy?

Jill: I never served in the Navy, but I want one of the women's uniforms.

Brina: We always figured if we got tired of writing about the sea, we could just write about the color navy.

Riley: My granddaddy was in the Navy in the Pacific, and I have a hot photo of him. He had a faded anchor tattoo on one arm, and his initials on the other.

MRR: Have you all known each other before creating Navy, or did you meet while making the band?

Jill: Riley, Brina, and I met at film school in NYC.

MRR: Was it hard creating a band with such a precise theme? Did you set out to call yourselves Navy and make the sea your focus, or was it established later?

Riley: We started as a group of non-musicians, *and still are*, so we chose a theme to keep us focused, but I don't feel bound to it. I think you'll find that our next album is more elastic, both musically and thematically. Plus, we learned how to play instruments.

MRR: How do you describe yourselves?

Brina: Salty.

Jill: Carefree, like the sea.

MRR: Do you work in any other areas besides music?

Jill: I work for a youth culture internet company, but they let me work from home. I'm also a Polaroid enthusiast, and I make Super-8 films. I collect Polaroid cameras and cases, and I recently made a Super-8 film of my cute grandma.

Riley: I'm a video editor, and sometimes go-go dancer.

Brina: I teach kids video in Harlem, and I also do video work on my own.

MRR: Is there anything that you feel strongly about that you try to put across in your music, any political or social messages?

All: We believe in the importance of non-musicianship, sexual and political mutiny, and the legacy of sea-inspired song, poetry, and literature.

MRR: Do you have any other recordings out, or is it just this CD?

Jill: Our second album will be available through our website this month!

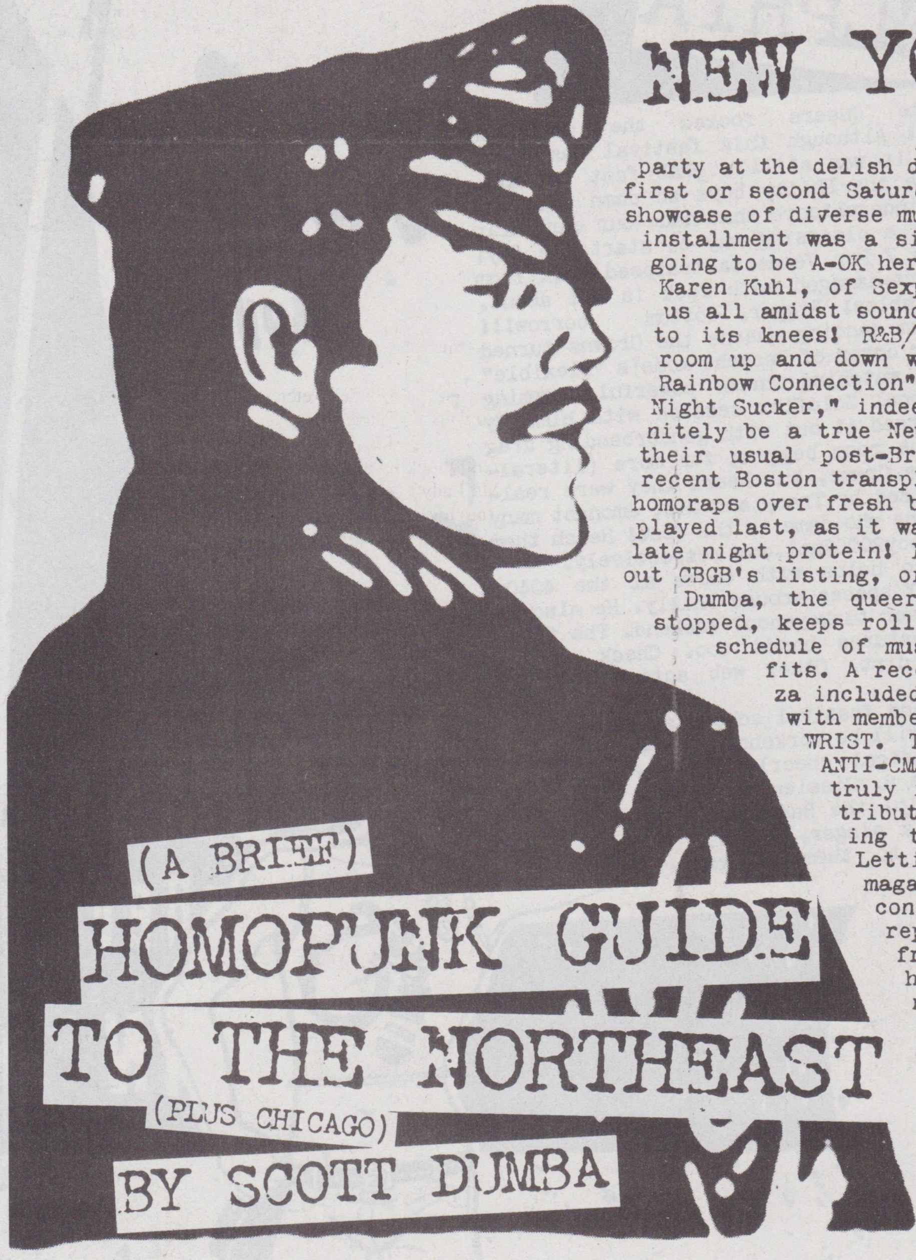
MRR: Are there any other pieces of information you would like me to include, like tour dates?

Jill: You can check the website for our shows coming up. We expect to go on a back-to-school tour in September.

MRR: Thanks a lot. I am sorry for having to e-mail you the interview. I love your band. You played this really good song at your show, I guess it's called Safe Harbors, is there any chance I can get it on any other CD?

Jill: Thank you so much for your interest and support. "Safe Harbors" is the title of the song that is on the Mr. Lady compilation.

www.navy-nyc.com
www.mrlady.com



(A BRIEF)

HOMOPUNK GUIDE TO THE NORTHEAST

(PLUS CHICAGO)

BY SCOTT DUMBA

NEW YORK

Dean Johnson, he of the near-legendary downtown gospel rock revivalists, Velvet Mafia, is now doing a monthly party at the delish dive of all dives, CBGB's. Held the first or second Saturday of each month, HOMOCORPS is a showcase of diverse musical talents, and if the October installment was a sign of things to come, then we're going to be A-OK here in the rotten apple. That month, Karen Kuhl, of Sexpod fame, rawked, rolled and rode us all amidst sound troubles, and made the room come to its knees! R&B/Soul temptress Xavier funked the room up and down with his acoustic version of "The Rainbow Connection" and the band joined him for "All Night Sucker," indeed! And at 6'6" Xavier would definitely be a true New York marathon! Velvet Mafia did their usual post-Brechtian cabaret on speed, while recent Boston transplants Morplay did some free-stylin homoraps over fresh beats. I missed Paxton and whoever played last, as it was nearing 2 am, and I needed some late night protein! For more info on Homocorps, check out CBGB's listing, or go to www.velvetmafia.com

Dumba, the queer collective space that can't be stopped, keeps rolling toward Babylon with a monthly schedule of music, performance, film, and benefits. A recent homosexy punk rock extravaganza included the only queer straight-edge band with members who live in three states: LIMPWRIST. This show was part of a two-day ANTI-CMJ festival, showing solidarity for truly independently made, produced, distributed and performed music, by refusing to succumb to the CMJ mentality. Letting a company with interests in magazine publishing, radio reports, conferences marketing ["reissue, repackage repackage" comes to mind, from that fab Smiths song!] tell you how to place your product in the marketplace is the antithesis to DIY culture. LIMPWRIST showed a room of folks where the queer hardcore hits: below the belt. Martin Crudo, in a lovely skirt and showing off his delightful hairy chest, told the boys to take off their shirts, spoke of the evils of body-fascism, and even encouraged homosocial behavior in the pit!

Through such classics as "I love hardcore boys, I love boys hardcore" and "Limpwrist Theme," there was so much flesh moving so fast, I need to see some photos to remind myself how delish those precious 25 minutes were! Unfortunately, they high-tailed it to Boston that night so they could record their eagerly awaited debut and swan-song record. Also showing off were Philly's finest, Kill the Man Who Questions (which also features sexy Andrew Martini of Limpwrist), and Rambo, replete in military fatigues and a nude dancer in full body paint, which I tried to rub off to no avail. Openers Books Lie feature two former Yum-Yum Trees, and were full of spastic moves and grooves. Dumba is always looking for volunteers, folks to show their artwork, bands to play, benefits to host, films to screen. It is a collective, volunteer-run and not for profit effort, so get in touch with them at www.tao.ca/ dumba

Yours for the ssking is the annual NYC "Gay Shame" zine, called *SWALLOW YOUR PRIDE*. Featuring rants, collage, poetry, prose, and a cassette! Send a dollar or stamps, or if you prefer, a zine to trade, or at least a nice letter to: SYP c/o PO Box 20900, Tompkins Square Station, New York, NY 10009.

Anonymous Boy has a new issue out of his *HOMOPUNK WORLD* featuring an interview with C. Bard Cole, a piece about punk fans of Lukas Ridgeston and Johan Paulik, the darlings of Bel Ami's porno empire, and a great rant about *Hit List* fanzine. Plus the usual zine reviews you luv so much. PO Box 1502, Old Chelsea Station, New York, NY 10011.

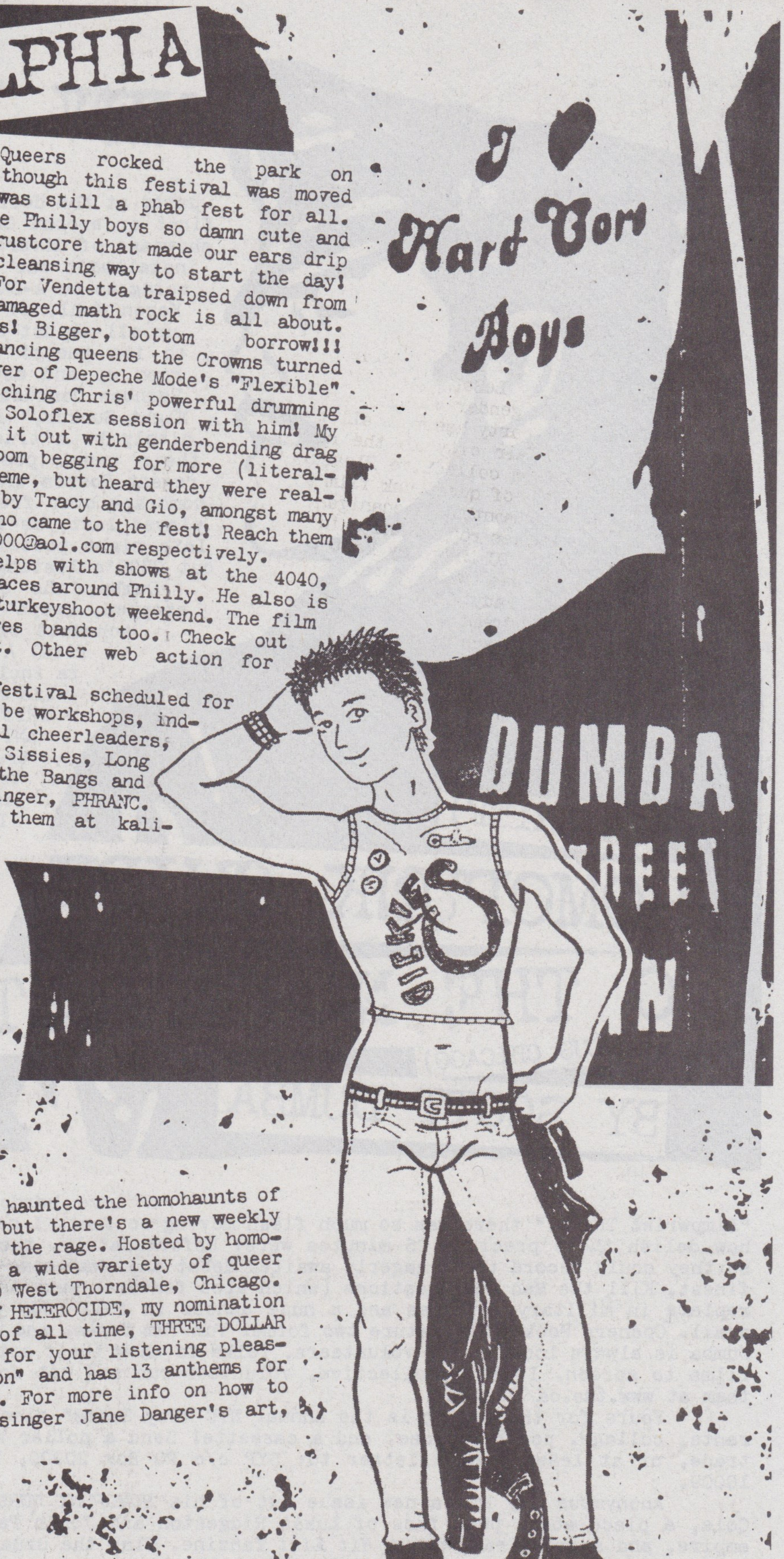
Now that the sleazy IC Guys has bitten the dust, what is a queer punk slut to do? Well, I haven't had the pleasure of attending, due to my so-called active schedule, and that day job on Monday mornings, but the newish Club Badd, on Sunday nights at the infamous Pyramid, is supposedly trying to recreate some sort of sordid scene. The nontet denizens Fischerspooner recently played, and the club does video projections and spins a mix of punk, new wave, electro, and house. 101 Avenue A. Sundays, 10 pm to 4 am.

PHILTHYDELPHIA

The Queers rocked the park on September 23! Although this festival was moved indoors to the Center, it was still a phab fest for all. Myles of Destruction (why are the Philly boys so damn cute and sweet?) played the loudest grindcrustcore that made our ears drip wax and blood for hours! What a cleansing way to start the day! And then deloverly dykely duo V For Vendetta traipsed down from Providence to show us what art-damaged math rock is all about. More please! Multiplication tables! Bigger, bottom borrow!!! Heartcore Records houseband cum dancing queens the Crowns turned it up and cranked it out. Their cover of Depeche Mode's "Flexible" left my loins in a lurch, and watching Chris' powerful drumming arms made me wish for a personal Soloflex session with him! My escorts, the Backdoor Boys, turned it out with genderbending drag king grandiosity, that left the room begging for more (literally!). I missed Rubeo and Triple Creme, but heard they were really supahh. This fest was organized by Tracy and Gio, amongst many others-props to them and everyone who came to the fest! Reach them at tracy@critpath.org and gateboy2000@aol.com respectively.

The ubiquitous Gio also helps with shows at the 4040, Killtime Warehouse and other DIY spaces around Philly. He also is working on the Lost Film Fest over turkeyshoot weekend. The film fest shows indy films and features bands too. Check out www.lostfilmfest.com for more dirt. Other web action for shows: www.r5productions.com

KALI MAA FAIR is a weekend festival scheduled for July 6-8, 2001 in Philly. There will be workshops, independent films, spoken word, radical cheerleaders, and lots of music, such as Tribe 8, Sissies, Long Hind Legs, Prettypony, The Gossip, the Bangs and our favorite Jewish lesbian folk singer, PHRANC. For more info send an email to them at kalimaafair@yahoo.com



A PUNK ROCK DREAMBOAT!!!

CHICAGO

Unfortunately I haven't haunted the homohaunts of the Windy City in some time, but there's a new weekly party called GRINDER that's all the rage. Hosted by homohulk Scott Free, it features a wide variety of queer music at the Willow Cafe, 1100 West Thorndale, Chicago.

Featuring ex-members of HETEROCIDE, my nomination for best queerpunk band name of all time, THREE DOLLAR BILL have a new compact disc for your listening pleasures. It's called "Insurrection" and has 13 anthems for our collective colossal souls. For more info on how to give the gift of music and singer Jane Danger's art, check our www.threedollar.net

TORONTO

"The best thing to happen to Toronto in the last ten years" says *This is the Salivation Army* zinester Skot Treleaven about the monthly VASELINE. And as someone who has had the lucky pleasure of witnessing a lubricated evening of mayhem, let me just say, I wish the folks doing it were closer to homo, 'cause I'd be there every single sexy minute! VASELINE started in the late spring, as a project by punk underwear maker Will Munro with help from Barbarafisch and hostess Tawny LeSabre. Attempting to inject some queer punk rock gender bending performance into the nightlife, this party has made all the requisite headlines in this fair city to the north. Working with experimental film collective Pleasuredome, they presented a program of queerpunk film and video in June, followed by the monthly shenanigans. Rapper/performance artist Peaches rapped and whined over beats, bass and busts, while DJ Miss Guy kept the dancefloor moving into the wee wee hours. Recent performances include Vyvyan, Lady Bunny, and in November watch out for Dr. Vaginal Creme Davis! VASELINE takes place the last Friday of each month at the El Mocambo, 464 Spadina, call 416-533-0236 for booking info or send an email to apocalipstick@hotmail.com

A true homopunk heroine, GB Jones has a new issue of her *BITCH NATION* newsletter! Featuring an interview with Rita Fatila, editor of *Pure Tuna Fish* zine, this is where I learn about the freshest and newest queer zines on the block. Kewt cover boy Kevin of *Gorgeous* zine and the band The Cocoa Stains is making me want to drool all the way Pittsburgh! The newsletter features updates on queer punque films and filmmakers, zinesters, and bands, and is essential! GB is a swell letter writer too, so send your finest cursive this way-"PO Box 55, Station E, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6H 4E1.

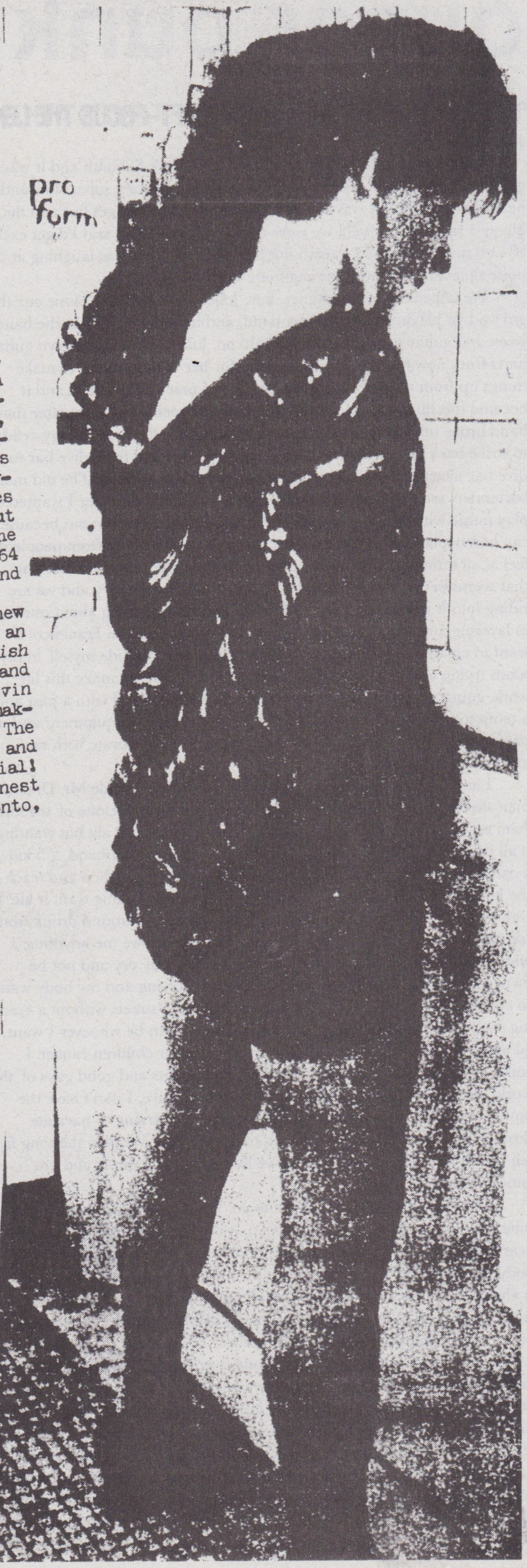
BOSTON

I don't think my friends in Beantown will be too offended if I say that things there are a little slow going, but the Lesbian Avengers have a very active chapter and are eager to recruit, so go to the web and get femailing now, alright!? Also, queerrevolt has been dormant, but the cutest raverpunk I know, Taylor, would love some help smashing preconceived notions in this town, so write him at taylor@tao.ca

Also, homo hunk Greg from Prettypony has recently relocated from Bloomington to just outside of Boston, and is playing music with some ladies and will hopefully be gracing our eyes and ears very soonly! Check out www.prettypony2k.com oh, and don't fret your pants, cuz Prettypony hasn't broken up!

And I would be remiss if I didn't mention the whopper of them all, *Holy Titclamps*, a truly inspiring paperzine, website, and resource. Take your bedroom eyes to Larrybob's extensive site for info on queerbands on tour, queer/queerfriendly venues, rants, raves, and links galore! Hours of endless autostimulation! www.holytitclamps.com

But, you probably knew all about that already. Please send your local updates to Scene and Herd. I also welcome photos, letters, wish lists, mix-tapes, and anything to do with Klaus Nomi. Reach out and touch! Love, Sissy Fuss, dumba@tao.ca



TURN UP THE DISTORTION AND SOFT-FOCUS THE LENS

Kat Case

I spent today playing the bass like I was Black Sabbath and it was gorgeous. We'd begin a song and we'd play it five times, super slow and heavy, and I'd think I was controlling it, and then she'd get fast and the guitar'd rip through itself, we were manic and repetitive and I'd get excited and my voice would scream out like a hyena, cuz I was laughing at the noise that was somehow coming outta me.

We talk about lots of things, how Julie started playing music cuz this girl said yr. playing guitar for my band, and initially this guy in the band wrote her guitar parts. But the girl said no, Julie is writing her own guitar parts from now on. And it was so scary for her at first, trying to make things up from a vacuum, but she did it and practiced like hell and it became this huge part of her life. I remember seeing her right after that band broke up, she was so upset and drunk and full of rad energy, ready to strike back and figure out something new. We went from dive bar to dive bar near her house, drinking in a large group of boys. The old man bartenders seemed overwhelmed but loving. I kept telling her I wanted to play music with her, and she said yeah and it made me nervous because I can barely play and it takes forever for me to learn things from people if I feel at all intimidated. Now six months later we are playing something that seems between metal and punk, it's so loose and heavy and we are riding into it with a sway on our backs, I am daydreaming about our voices layering and shows with pissy girls in the streets of San Francisco. I want to create something with other people. I tend to hide myself in my room trying to come up with the ideas that are going to make this life work, going to make me into something other than a girl with a past and a temp job. In this room, with half the world's musical equipment and my bass and my amp and my hands making the e-string vibrate with rage and power, something is being born.

I am 24. I am supposed to be laying on my back while Mr. Dreamman shoves his love into me to make our very own little clone of together. I am supposed to wake up motivated by fear and want it all; but wanting it all does not mean wanting it all, it means wanting a husband, 2.5 kids, a career in advertising, and someone else to clean my kitchen and teach the kids to read. What are we gonna do if we really fucking want it all? I want to make art, I want to eat food, I want to dance around drunk from too much tequila in the rain with people who don't owe me anything. I want to fuck girls and boys and hold them when they cry and not be owned by anyone in any way. My ideology is evolving and my body wants to evolve along with it. I want to burn through the streets without a cracking shell and I want to tell the cops to fuck off, I can be whoever I want, go arrest the power companies that are giving your children cancer. I could never even do anything bad, the governments and good guys of the world kill millions because they must be cost-effective, I don't have the power to do anything wrong. Fuck, it's exhausting, trying to navigate through an ocean they don't want us to know exists. We play the song five ten fifteen more times and then we've had enough of music and not enough beer.

There's a show and we decide to go. We get beer and we are ready. Julie does the math, she adds things up, we've had many many ounces of beer over the course of the evening. I don't really understand how my body can handle it, but it's been fine for a while now. Julie is fabulous, she is ahead of me with her beer, busting it open the second we leave the store, clear-eyed. We talk about her family in El Salvador; the earthquake did not kill them, but where're their homes? So many disasters everywhere, the world is aching bad, everyone is getting hurt, we have got to be more careful. Three of my friends have been hit by cars recently. My housemate fell out of her girlfriend's loft and broke her tailbone. Oh oh too much. Julie is telling me about her family, and it makes me think about how we learn about events in this country; pick up a stack of these papers and hear dispassionately about things that seem increasingly less real each paragraph you scan through. I fall down, I tripped over someone's old shoe and I'm drunk and the beer spills on the jeans I wear every day, like a security blanket, after I get out of the clothes I disguise myself in for work. She asks if I'm okay, but I always fall, it's just who I am and what I do, I fall down in this body of clumsiness and agility. Part of me just wants to stay on the sidewalk, not walk in to the show where everyone will be talking and I'll feel displayed and sure that they all notice my smeared lipstick and hungry instincts. She helps me up and I guess I'm getting up off the sidewalk.

The streets are wet but not cold; it's my favorite kind of weather, the asphalt has been licked clean and everything stinks a little less of nausea and indecision. I ask Julie what she wants our songs to be about; anger and identity? Yeah, and long songs about the politics of drinking in the streets.

And here we are, ready to hear some boys cut into it with aggression and chaos on a Tuesday night. My present temp job is ridicules, I work noon to five, so each day I am full of plans for waking up early and reading about the world before work. Of course, I just go out at night and sleep in past the alarm.

The house is brighter than usual and we graze slowly past clumps of people, the hot tough blond girl that lives in my friend's closet, the boys who work at the record stores, the groups of younger kids that try to stand up as straight as possible. I am hunched-over and tired. I am boiling inside with all the anxiety and caffeine that has replaced blood and water in my body. We look through some records the bands are distributing, compete over the weird used stuff they mixed in, and it makes me laugh. There's a copy of *In God We Trust Inc.*, The first punk album I ever had, a list of classics from the Dead Kennedys with the song "Hyperactive Child," *Oh hyperactive child blah blah yr. too wild stick a needle in yr. ass now this won't hurt a bit.* It gets me fucking misty. And there is Crass and everything else from the mid-80s when it was still cool to be political. I'm feeling it, looking around, relaxed with malt liquor and time.

Some 18 year-old kid gives me eyes and brings over his friend who says I don't know you, but can I have some beer? I hand it over, tell him to get a few good swigs out of it. And the kid smiles at me like I'm some dumb chick whose parents took away her puppy and if he gives me a little attention, I'll be willing to go down on him forever. I was some form of that girl, some form of a girl who had been laughed at too much and who just didn't want to be laughed at again. So here's Mr. 15 year-old Cool Guy. He and his friend want to "Hang out, drink beer, listen to good music." And I don't ask where he gets off thinking that I'm up for the taking. I lean back and turn my head, drunken and exhausted, hoping maybe Julie will help me straighten this mess, but she is knee-deep in a discussion of guitar pedals. The kid asks again, would I like to hang out next Tuesday? The taller one who likes my eyes says "I think we're being blown off," and they walk away. As he goes, Mr. Eye-man looks directly at me and says: "You are hot anyway."

I sock Julie's arm and she turns around and I explain the situation. Somehow I make it funny but it just depresses me. We go in to hear the band; they are totally heavy and the noise grounds me. They're a bunch of Canadian kids who traveled to San Francisco to lose their alienation; their eyes haven't been beaten-in by apathy the way the rest of ours have.

When I leave, it is dark. The streets are icy hot with people moving quickly in light jackets, waiting for trains and experience. A girl waits on the corner in a short skirt, she has long braids grazing the sides of her neck. She looks awkward and angry from the way she holds her body rigid against a rippled lightpost. She is held up against me; she is stacked up against the whole world, with cars slowing down looking for action. And I'm with them, I look at her ass shimmy in a satin skirt and I think of the way it feels to know that your ass is being watched. It's all complicated being a girl who fucks girls, wanting the body and owning it at the same time. It's an equation I still haven't really worked out. She hasn't either; the glare she gives me is at once disgusted and less automatic than the one she reserves for the rows of men who pass in a train of foggy headlights, slowing close to us as if everyone with a cunt is up for the taking.

(This excerpt is from a short fiction fanzine that I wrote last summer. Write me if you want a copy. If you wanna order a copy of my fanzine, send two bucks to Thirty-Six Snap Shots, c/o Kat Case, PO box 401160, San Francisco, CA 94140.) ■

WITH ALL THE PUNKS THAT HAVE BEEN CALLED "QUEER" AND ALL THE QUEERS THAT HAVE BEEN CALLED "PUNKS," ONE WOULD THINK THAT THE TWO WOULD GO HAND IN HAND BY NOW.

Ben Holtzman

On looking at your average punk show, one finds even further evidence that punk is indeed a haven for queer activity. A group of males (after all, there are no women in hardcore, right?), sweaty, ramming into each other, often in pursuit of a seven-inch shaft they can't wait to get their hands on and their mouth near. The whole thing looks like the beginning of a Bruce La Bruce movie.

However, as most queers involved in the scene know, the punk/hardcore scene is sorely lacking in its queer presence and in many cases, its queer acceptance. Aside from a few examples, the queer voice is rarely heard, even within the DIY scene. The scene on Long Island is no exception.

A few months ago, when I first heard about the *Maximumrocknroll* queer issue, Wells from Traffic Violation Records (who, though not queer, is still an awesome guy) and I wanted to put something together for the issue, concerning our scene on Long Island. We didn't want to limit it simply to our opinions or only to kids from within the DIY-oriented scene that we were most active in. We wanted to gather a bunch of queer kids, both from the DIY and other scenes to discuss their experiences being queer within the punk/hardcore scenes on Long Island. However, despite both being active in the (DIY) scene, neither of us were familiar with anyone who was openly queer, besides myself. So, we began outreach to both the DIY and other scenes on Long Island, hoping to find queer kids.

We both spread the word among kids that we knew and asked them to spread the word as well. We also made mention of it at shows and posted on a few message boards. We said that we were looking for anyone in the scene who was gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning that would be interested in taking part in a private discussion we'd have on our experiences in punk/hardcore scene on LI, which would be used as a basis for an article for the MRR issue. We also tried to make it clear that this could be done anonymously. Further, I also stressed that even if people didn't want to take part in the article, that I was greatly interested in hearing from any other queer kids on Long Island, regardless of the article.

We heard nothing. No word from anyone who identified themselves as queer. No one who even knew of any queer participants in the scene. It was a shock. I didn't presume that we got the word out to every single person involved on Long Island, particularly in the less DIY-oriented scene. However, with the outreach that we did do, I do think enough kids heard about it for us to be pretty surprised and disturbed by the fact that neither of us heard from anyone. I figured that there had to have been at least one, if not many others, especially within the much, much larger less DIY-oriented scene. And though Wells and I were friends with a great number of the kids in the scene, neither of us presumed to know everyone's sexuality. After all, though I had made mention of it previous to us talking about the article, I don't think everyone even in the DIY scene knew that I was queer. However, on hearing from no one, I was pretty fucking taken aback.

I don't believe that there aren't *any* other queer kids in the Long Island scenes. I think that this is the sign of two significant problems. One, that the number of queer kids involved in the scenes is probably extraordinarily small (though probably higher than just me). And two, that even those who are queer in the scene most likely aren't willing (or perhaps better put, *able)* to be vocal about their sexuality within the scene. This needs to be addressed.

I started to ask a number of kids within the Long Island DIY scene what they thought about the lack of a queer presence. Most didn't have any suggestions for what could be done to improve the situation (it became sort of obvious that most people hadn't thought about it), but nearly all stressed that there was zero tolerance for homophobia in the scene. While I think this is a positive notion, I think it's also leading to the perpetuation of the problem. (This clearly also relates to sexism and racism as well, but because of this issue's theme, I'll stick with homophobia).

This thinking makes the enemy too easy to identify and allows us to easily distance ourselves from it. It allows us to think that because no one is walking around with Nazi armband, that we've smashed oppression within our scene. Thus, most of the time, no discussion takes place until such a blatant example rears its ugly head. The "zero tolerance" thinking and lack of discussion that often comes with it, allows for a lack of continually addressing the more subtle homophobia that each of us have and that exists within the scene. It's easier to identify and fight against the Nazi at a show than it is to address the ways in which each of us has homophobia.

Instead of simply responding by saying there's "zero tolerance" for homophobia, we should instead be honest about how probably none of us (and I am including myself and other queer kids) have conquered all forms of homophobia within us. We should start talking honestly about it. What is your initial reaction to seeing two people of the same sex (especially, if you're not queer, your own sex) embrace? Have you ever even seen two members of the same sex embrace and kiss in person? What assumptions do you make when you hear that someone is queer? What are the ways in which you justify letting homophobic words and jokes be said without challenging them?

I think it's necessary we, and again I am including a lot of queer kids, address these and other similar notions on a continuous basis, enabling us to go further in the process. This process needs to constantly be questioned and challenged and should not simply be dismissed by claiming to have "zero tolerance" for the most blatant forms of it. Through dialogue and discussion with each other, we can address these issues and help each of other and ourselves to further in the process. It's been my experience that this discussion very rarely takes place.

Bringing up the issue not only helps to allow each of us to further in the process, but also reassures queer kids that people do actually care and are working towards ending homophobia. Shows need to be places where queer kids, who may be coming from situations where families or "friends" have completely rejected (or whom they know *will* completely reject) them because of their sexuality, can know that they're in a place where there truly is an effort being put forth to eliminate homophobia. Though actual dialogue may be more crucial, sometimes even as simple as writing a song can also really help.

People who complain that writing songs about sexism, racism, and homophobia are nothing but cliches by now, probably don't know what it feels like to be affected by those notions. While songs can perpetuate the same problem the "zero tolerance" attitude does by making confronting homophobia seem so simplistic and easy, I think it can also engender dialogue and further the notions of acceptance at shows. It's important that we follow up on the words with actions, but the words themselves do help. I swear, I smile every fucking time The Insurgent play "Silence Equals Death" because it is a reaffirmation that I am in a place that is trying to create an environment of acceptance and community and that queer kids have a place in it. And though the feedback from our attempt to find other queer kids for the column may give evidence for otherwise, I am sure I'm not the only one in the room doing the same thing.

Lastly, I think that those of us who are queer have a responsibility to make ourselves be known. I am not in any way suggestion someone should "come out" before they're ready or even that those who are somewhat out absolutely must make sure everyone knows that they're queer. I wouldn't in any way want someone to put themselves in a situation that they weren't ready for. However, I would really encourage queer kids to let others know of their presence once they're ready. On Long Island, the scene is very much white, male, heterosexual, and middle class, and thus it breeds and appeals to people from that background. People who don't fit that background could help break that perpetuation by making their voices heard. Additionally, I think queer kids who weren't ready to be open about their sexuality would take great comfort in knowing there were other queer kids in the scene.

Again, I really don't think issue is at all specific to Long Island. I'm sure this needs to be addressed in most scenes across the US and the world. Through discussion and action we can help to improve this situation and help improve ourselves and our community.

We need to abandon this "zero tolerance" attitude that many of us claim to have and start dealing openly about our attitudes, feelings, and reactions. And for the other queer punks/hardcore kids on Long Island, please contact me at: beholtzman@vassar.edu ■

I AM A DIRTY TRANSSEXUAL FAGGOT PUNK.

X. Nerdcore

One of my favorite things to do is going to shows as a trashy death metal drag queen. I hang out with the freaks and geeks; I don't feel comfortable in the queer punk scene. I assume most of the kids I hang out with are straight. This might very well be a false assumption, but I think I can count the number of dirty punk rock faggots I know on one hand. Occasionally, as I sit in a room with a bunch of tough-ass metal rockers with beautiful long dreads, exquisite tats, and [insert your favorite black metal band here] sleeveless tshirts, I think, what if all these dudes were actual fags? If that were true I believe I would fall on my face (hopefully with a dick in my ass). It seems, for a while at least, that will remain my own private fantasy.

Why is the queer punk scene so clean? Across the country, queer punks seem to be the glamorous, beautiful people, kids who go to scenester bars and know how to be smooth. Yeah, maybe the true misfits stay at home, or maybe I just don't go out enough to meet the weirdos. Except that I do go out. I go to shows and jump around in the pit with other hot sweaty bodies, and you know I'm trying to figure out who else thinks the pit is really a sexdance.

Of course there are queers in every part of the punk scene. As I talk to more people, it's actually not unusual to learn that some random person is a queer. But I know that when I'm at some rock show, while I'm not exactly closeted about being a fag, I'm not actively hitting on people or being really Loud about being queer either. And I'm pretty reluctant to reveal my tranny-ness. When I'm at shows, unless they're specifically queer or I'm there with a posse, I keep my mouth shut with my usual perverted comments. If I'm in drag, people don't hesitate to make perverted comments to me, but they're usually the wrong sort of perverted, the disrespectful kind.

In general, punk rock shows seem either asexual or all about restricted hetero energy. Seeing a good grindcore or metal band makes me want to jump into a big pansexual wrestling sex match! This is perhaps too advanced a request for the usual crowd. Or maybe somebody just has to do it! A couple of time I did start making out with some guy in the pit, which was excellent fun. Once this guy and I got into a weird fighting sex dance and I guess some people were pretty disturbed. It was really hot.

Recently I went into the pit in drag, and it was very obvious that for a minute the kids didn't know what to do with this monster drag queen in the middle of everything. I started jumping around and I guess they eventually figured out that they could be as rough with me as they were with each other. But it was clear that some level of surprise and confusion remained.

Often when I start jumping around and getting rowdy at the Queer shows, it seems like the wrong vibe, regardless of the kind of band playing. I don't want to be the asshole that rams into people when they're into their personal space. But surely there are other loud'n'out queers who like to be rough? Alternately, it's also true that some of the best pits I've been in have been at queer shows, where people were having fun, getting crazy, and stupid pit assholes were absent.

Ultimately I don't give a fuck how crusty somebody is or how "queer." It's better to experiment, have fun, and get laid, than to stay mired in jaded generalizations. Probably the only thing that came out of hardcore identity politics was a bunch of tight assholes that could be loosened up with some good sluttery. Like a lot of people, I don't feel like I fit in too well anywhere. I object to the scenesterism that leaves the freaks and geeks in the corner. (Unless it is the back hallway in the sex club sense of the word, I suppose.) And I sure don't want to hang out with a bunch of clones, be they punk rock beauties, Gays, or suburban mall rat idiots. "Scenes" and constrained identities mirror the restrictions of the capitalist demon culture that fucked us all up in the first place. Viva la Freak! ■

THE SECRET LIFE OF AN ASEXUAL

Amanda

When I was younger I expected to one day come out as a lesbian. That's what happened on the after-school specials, when a girl didn't have a boyfriend, didn't fit in, or acted like a "tomboy." I filled all of the above requirements, at least in some people's definitions. My mom would ask me if I was a lesbian and I expected to one day say, "that's been the problem all along. I am into girls." But it didn't happen. Not much happened with boys either.

There are homophobes who will tell you homosexuality is wrong. Then there are people who are not homophobic and they will say all kinds of love are grand. No one tells you that it is OK to lead a life devoid of sex. If you do they think you are rather queer; which you are; which I am.

It is a lonely life being an asexual, a term I do embrace. I don't intend to limit myself with this label but my history of reactions to sexuality, my lack of sexual experiences and my attraction to few lead me to sway towards the A.

NO ONE TELLS YOU THAT IT IS OK TO LEAD A LIFE DEVOID OF SEX. IF YOU DO THEY THINK YOU ARE RATHER QUEER; WHICH YOU ARE; WHICH I AM.

If we trace back a few years we may see how I blocked out dealing with sexuality. I found people more attractive who came off in a non-sexual manner. I came off that way as well; non-sexual. I was completely uncomfortable with the topic of sexuality. If it came up, I ignored it or left the room. I wanted to scream, or cry when friends tried to get me to talk about sex or masturbation. It embarrassed me extremely.

Eventually a few friends and I started the Asexual Alliance (how tongue-in-cheek the coalition was we will never know; there were recruitment fliers at one point). Still, I couldn't really talk about my non-existent experiences, out of non-existent opportunities, as some of the others would say things like "we've had sex and we're choosing not to, right?" I was left feeling like no one would ever understand. Years later after my buddy in Germany and I started a Goettingen chapter of the Asexual Alliance and I saw that he had no qualms about telling people he had never had sex or kissed anyone, I felt less embarrassed about my history of asexuality. Now I can come out about my experience more easily. By the way readers, I still haven't had sex.

The issue of homosexuality resurfaced over time and I had crushes on women, but I felt fine when they showed no interest. On the other hand (no thanks to heterosexual socialization) I have become obsessed with one or two of the unrequited male crushes to the point of extreme depression. It is an unfortunate gender imbalanced situation but it is my personal reality. I try not to get obsessed with anyone, anymore, especially people with little interest in me. (In case anyone does not understand that crushes exist without the ultimate goal being fucking—they do).

In the last few months I have not been attracted enough to anyone to act on it. I've had people tell me that I am lucky for my asexuality and I have had people tell me they could never be asexual. But it is not as if it is something I want or don't want; it is simply a part of me. I can appreciate not having been in fucked-up relationships, and not having had sex and regretting it, on the other hand, life is really lonely and I don't appreciate the lack of intimacy and companionship. Like Morrissey said, "I am human and I need to be loved just like everybody else does." As Rrragazza Pom Pom said, "I'm just as sexual as you, I just lead a secret life as an asexual."

Comments? Dates? Respond to AmandaAA41@hotmail.com ■

NO WARNING: CONFRONTING HOMOPHOBIA IN THE PUNK SCENE

Bennett

In my early teens I was constantly harassed and threatened by homophobes, at school and in my neighborhood, Riverdale. Coming home from shows at night by myself, the same group of kids that hung out on the corner of my street would always call me things like Satan, faggot, queer, and threaten to beat me up. Somehow I always avoided being jumped and just kept quiet, not giving them any reason to fight me. They would throw stuff at me and say they were going to cut off my colored hair and shove it up my ass. I acted submissive and they were content enough with that. When I got home I would be so angry that I wished I had a gun, so I could go back there and take them all out. I would punch the wall and go over in my head all the torturous things I would do to them. When the anger and adrenaline subsided, I would feel so helpless and hurt that I would just cry. Punks were very few and far between in my neighborhood. I had no crew to back me up.

A few years ago for some reason hardcore became suddenly popular in Riverdale and all these kids got into it and young bands started forming like As We Once Were (interviewed in MRR #203 Apr. '98), Young Blood, Head Held High, Good for None, and others. I thought this was pretty cool for them and wished this had been the case when I was younger. Then on December 19, 2000, the new incarnation of As We Once Were, named No Warning, played a show opening for Tragedy. I was disappointed to hear the singer calling people faggots on stage. At least They Live and Ruination both made fun of the singer during their sets and mocked his actions by calling themselves fags, but I still felt uneasy.

Then, recently I was on the internet buying tickets for a festival and I thought I would try and find out if anyone else from Toronto was going that I could get a ride with. I came across the Toronto Hardcore Message Board, which I had never checked out before. It was pretty fucking ridiculous. It was basically a place for No Warning and their friends to throw around racist, sexist, homophobic language and insults in an environment where they could get away with it. If someone did post anything calling them on it, they would just post an angry or violent response. Was this a joke or for real? Even if this was a joke I didn't see how it was at all funny. Talking about a guy they ordered pizza and wings from they say this; (05/25/01) **beaches182**: "I hate that fucking faggot." **Cooker**: "don't fuck with my yellow friends at 1+2. They call me boss I call them bro." **beaches182**: "They call me nothing, I call that one guy a no good immigrant who should be deported back to his homeland where he can serve cat wings or whatever they eat in China. Not crucial, just the harsh realities of the pecking order in life." They talk endlessly about hookers and going to strip clubs and "pounding bush" and "hitting up mad sluts." They joke about AIDS, they call women bitches, sluts, and whores, and most of all call each other fag and homo. This they seem to be obsessed with. They can't seem to write a sentence without using the word "fag." Within the message board I used a keyword search, which would list all the references for any word used within the last 30 days on the site. For words like fag, faggot, homo etc. there were 169 references. That's average five or six times a day. It was every member of No Warning and everyone in their crew.

I went to No Warning's website and followed a link to xmulletx.com who interview No Warning. This is a straight edge youth crew site that has their own message board that No Warning kids post on as well. I checked it out and was shocked to find the same thing. There were whole threads devoted to things like which sports figures were "fags." This made me totally depressed. Before I was thinking they were just a bunch of stupid kids who didn't know any better, but looking at the xmulletx message board it seemed like they were connected to something larger.

THEY JOKE ABOUT AIDS, THEY CALL WOMEN BITCHES, SLUTS, AND WHORES, AND MOST OF ALL CALL EACH OTHER FAG AND HOMO...I THINK IT'S STUPID AND DISAPPOINTING. AM I OVERREACTING?

My first thought was to post my feelings on the TOHC message board along with my phone number, so they could contact me if they wanted. But I figured it would be too easy for them to just post a reply calling me a faggot and telling me if I didn't like it, to not look at the website. Fair enough. But I still felt something needed to be done. I didn't expect to change their minds or even for them to question themselves necessarily, but I just needed to express my own opposition and anger. I decided I should go to the source and talk to these kids, and find out where their heads were at. MRR was looking for submissions for a queer issue that was coming up, so I figured that would be a good platform to "expose" this and bring it up as an issue by doing an interview with the band.

I talked to vocalist Ben Cook on the phone, the night before they were driving to Montreal to start their summer tour. I did the interview and then afterwards when I played back the tape all I could hear was my questions and nothing of him. Fuck. There goes my interview. Oh well. I can give you the gist of it... I told him I found it upsetting how frequently the kids in his band and his group of friends used words like faggot and homo as the ultimate insult. I told him I was interested to find out what hardcore meant to him exactly since his "attitude and opinions expressed on the message board and at shows seemed to more closely resemble the stereotypical 'jock' mentality than anything I would consider punk." I heard a click. "Hello?" "Yeah, sorry what was the question?" He was still there but I could hardly hear him like I was put on speakerphone or something. I asked again but this time more to the point; "So, what does hardcore mean to you?" He said something about moshing and listening to "heavy music like Cro-mags" but not "metal shit like Slayer." He said it was about friendship and having fun. Fair enough, can't argue with that. From here on the conversation was sort of awkward because I could barely hear what he was saying. I asked if they've had any resistance in other cities when they say homophobic comments on stage. He said yes. At a show in Pennsylvania he said some kid tried to pull his pants down or something so he called him a fag. Then someone got on stage and talked about homophobia and he said they just let him say his piece. I asked if there's been any negative reaction in Toronto and he said no. "What about the Tragedy show?" "Oh yeah, I called the kids in They Live faggots but they *are* faggots, so..." "Excuse me?" "I called them faggots but they *are* faggots so they deserved it." A bit thrown off by that, I referred back to my question sheet. "I'd like to believe you're just trying to piss people off by being as obnoxious as possible, but especially with the homophobic comments they seem to be more sincere than sarcastic. The latest posting I looked at on the TOHC message board was about your tour and how someone was 'looking forward to killing French faggots.' Is this a growing mentality in a sect of hardcore I should be worried about, where hateful beliefs and bigotry are acceptable and allowed to flourish? At what point do you draw the line between an "innocent joke" and promoting hate?" He got a bit defensive and said that the "killing French faggots" comment wasn't him and he wouldn't say that. He also said they weren't trying to piss people off or be obnoxious, and that the message board was just a joke. I expected him to say that, but I think the point he doesn't realize or doesn't care about is that not everyone is in on their "joke." To someone viewing them from the outside like myself, the stuff they're saying is pretty fucked up and it's hard to understand why exactly they are a part of this scene.

For me punk was about confronting racism, sexism, homophobia etc. and it helped provide a space for me to explore my sexuality and allow myself to be attracted to other boys and act on it. This trend in hardcore seems to be the opposite to me and I find it sad and a bit scary. In my new neighborhood, Parkdale, there are Nazi skinheads who display their prejudice with white power patches and tattoos. How did these Nazis I see on the street get to that point where they've become so hardcore in their hate? We aren't born with these prejudices. There has to be some period of conditioning where prejudice and discrimination is accepted and encouraged. Subcultures provide these environments where collective values can be adopted. It bothers me to see hateful shit being expressed in a scene that I identify with, without very much resistance to it. Sometimes one thing leads to another and I don't think it's too far fetched to think like this. Why are they still getting shows? Why do people bother using their message board? Why are they being supported? I think it's stupid and disappointing. Am I overreacting? Should I even care? Let me know what you think.

benandzoe@hotmail.com ■

AFTER UNITY, WHAT?

Pedro Serrano

Among other things, I'm Central New Jersey's Puerto Rican, homosexual skinhead. You'll notice I refer to myself as homosexual, not gay. Truth be told, I haven't been gay in years. No, I'm not some ex-gay born-again Christian. I'm just a homosexual. There was just too much work in being gay. I mean there were all these meetings I had to go too, all that furniture I had to buy, the designer cloths to keep up with, and I just could never get into taking the designer drugs. Talk about pretentious. Oh, and the music sucks!

So I decided to just be homosexual. The final decision I guess came in the late 1980s when I saw my options as either being gay or a skinhead. I decided to go back to shaving my head and being a skinhead. I'd been going through a five-year hair phase and the gay scene just didn't have room for someone who looked like the guitarist from Guns and Roses. I can't say why for sure. maybe it's because I grew up in a poor/working class environment and the guys in the skinhead scene seemed familiar. Maybe it's because of my fuck-you attitude. Most likely it was my antisocial streak—wearing the skinhead uniform would help keep people away from me. I've been honest about my sexuality since the late 1980s. Not that every body knew. The boys kind of kept it on the down low. The few skins who knew found out from living at the Skinhead House of Pleasure in New Brunswick, New Jersey where I also was living.

"There's Pedro. He lives upstairs. He's gay, but he's cool." That's how Ugly Bill told Creepy Gary about me. By the way, those really were their names. You can't make shit like this up. "*What?*" Ugly elaborates. "Well, he's gay. But he's cool! Like he won't try anything on you." What's so hard to understand about that? Still, I felt Gary was stripping a few gears over this. A group of us were walking down the street and I felt the Funny Vibe. I look to my left and there was Gary looking at me. I figured a way would present itself that would get under Gary's skin like one of his tattoos. It came one day while hanging out in the kitchen. Brian Kienlin of the Bouncing Souls was talking to his girlfriend and used the word "queer." He turned immediately to me and said, "Oh Pedro, I hope I didn't offend you?" Which I thought was nice, him not wanting to offend me. I said, "Bryan, I can't get offended by everything people say. For example; 'Pedro, would you like a slice of fruit cake?' '*What do you mean by that?!*'" Everybody laughed out loud except Gary. Creepy Gary never laughed. He's creepy that way. But he did smile! I'd not seen that before. One week later I walk into the kitchen and there's Gary hanging out. "Hey Gary. You know the difference between a blow job and a ham sandwich? No? Want to have lunch tomorrow?" Every body laughs. Gary smiles. One week later I walk down into the kitchen and find Bryan. In walks Gary and they both pound the tops of there fists together. "Oh wow. You guys do that too?" They both look at me perplexed. "That's a homosexual greeting. Gay guys do that when they meet each other on the street." A stunned look flashes across there faces. "No! Are you serious?" I'm thinking "Man I could milk this for a month!" but I decided to have pity on them. "No I'm just joking around. It's not a homosexual greeting." They both start passing back and forth rubbing their fists against their jeans, saying, "I didn't feel a thing! I didn't feel a thing!"

I think a crossroad was passed when I told a skin named Mike the "Ham sandwich" joke. Gary asked, "So Pedro, have you ever given a guy a blow job?" Matter of factly, I said, "Yeah." And without missing a beat, Mike asks, "Really? Can you teach women?!" And I knew at that moment, I had arrived.

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There must have been something in the air during the late 80s. While I was getting back into the punk scene after trying to be gay, some kid in California starts a zine called *Homocore*. Bruce La Bruce publishes a zine called *J.D's* (short for Juvenile Delinquents) And in New York, a hardcore punk rocker known as Mike Bullshit starts a band called "Go!" after he came out of the closet. Mike B.S. was known in the scene for a while before his being honest about his sexuality. It caused a stir in the Harder Than Thou hardcore scene at the time.

Around that same time, the Bad Brains put out an album with a song stating that if you just accept Jah (God), he'll make you heterosexual. Mike's response was to write a song that told HR, among other things, to "Eat Shit..." So because of that record Mike put out, there was (how shall we say it?) a cultural discussion on the issue of homophobia. Or at least the potential for a discussion. When I saw him perform at ABC No Rio he told the crowd that he was going to the venue where The Bad Brains were performing that night to hand out fliers pointing out the band's less-than-positive mental attitude concerning homosexuality. He wanted help handing out fliers as well as back up in case of violence.

I never once got the impression that Mike Bullshit wanted to silence HR or the Bad Brains. What I saw was a person expressing himself and getting his voice heard by his community. And what's more, he was helping to create a more tolerant environment for himself and people that were gay in the scene, those out and closeted. There have been plenty of other punk bands with and without gay members, and bands with and without gay members that have spoken out against homophobia.

Over time, I've seen an option for gay kids dealing with their sexuality to go to instead of the pop commercial gay culture. In June of 2001, a three-day music festival was held in LA called Scutter Fest. Rudy Rodriguez Is the publisher of *Scutter* zine and decided to put on a concert. Why? To raise money for a scholarship fund for gay art students.

Next year, he'll be giving two kids one thousand dollars each for college and they'll have a space at next year's Scutter Fest to show off their work. What was it that sent Rudy into the punk scene in the first place? The gay scene. When Rudy was coming out he was into punk rock already, but there weren't many gay boys around. So he decided to go to gay clubs to find his community. What he got was exposure to a lot of bigoted faggots that wouldn't look at him because he was "fat." The reason I put fat in quotes is because it's not a word I use. I didn't realize this till after I interviewed Rudy for my radio show. Nobody's "fat" in the hardcore scene: you're "Big." I remember talking with a kid in the scene. He had lost weight while sick. When I spoke with him he was nearly 200 lbs and was worried because he "...wasn't big anymore." Rudy was made to feel like crap because he didn't have hard tits and a tight ass. He had thought that he'd overcome the issues over his weight, but after spending time among his "gay brothers," those issues were back. Now instead of trying to fit in, Rudy is creating for himself a community and a network that will support him. He's also developing a culture with images and ideals that won't make gay kids feel sorry for themselves. Here again is just one of many examples (Queerstock, Queeruption, Homopaluza, Ladyfest... need I go on?) that can be offered to kids and the bisexual, gay, lesbian, transgendered communities. The DIY ethic would help to free out artists who long for a contract with a major record label. Independent zines provide a perspective celebrity-obsessed Gay Glossies avoid. And with the controversy around so-called homophobic hip hop, the punk scene has another example to offer.

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In the mid 1990s there was a band called Storm Watch that had a big skinhead following. On their first album was a song called "Stay in the Closet." While hanging at a local skinhead house, my brothers told me they'd just gotten a compilation with a live version of "Stay In The Closet." "Pedro, you gotta hear this. You can actually feel the hatred!" And so I finally got to hear "Stay in the Closet." Here's the chorus for you. "Stay in the closet 'cause it's safer in there. Stay in the closet 'cause we don't fight fair. Stay in the closet stay away from me. Stay in the closet for humanity."

And at the end, the lead singer Jeff roars to the crowed, "Bring it on, homeboys!" And hundreds of voices sang out, "Fag bashing in the USA! Fag bashing in the USA! Fag bashing in the USA! Fag bashing in the USA!"

Now I know what some of you are thinking. "What a dick!"

Then on the CD we heard what I was told was a SHARP (Skinheads Against Racial Prejudice) in the audience yelling at the band for being homophobic. Jeff among other things called him a "Heterophobe." We all gave the SHARP skin props for standing up for his principles. We don't know if

he's still alive...

A couple of months later while hanging out at a house where a basement show was taking place, a 6'3" 190 lb skin known as Scarhead walks in. I wondered for a moment what he was going to look like once he hit puberty. Scarhead sees me and says, "Pedro, Storm Watch is coming!"

I respond with "OK."

"No, seriously!"

I say "I believe you!"

I wasn't feeling worried. I can't tell you why for sure. Maybe it's because I feel secure in the scene. Maybe it's because my friends were there to back me up if things turned violent. Most likely it's because I'm not wired in the head right. So Jeff and his friends arrive, but to late for the show. We heard of a party up state. So we got ready too go by finishing what beer remained. While standing outside Jeff sees me and says, "I've seen you before! I'll be damned if I haven't met you before." Which is probably true. We've both been in the scene for a while. No doubt we'd run into each other at a show or two. Jeff offers me a beer. I decline. I'd planed on drinking later on in the evening. For now I wanted to keep my wits about me.

Giuseppe Mancini (one of the singers for skinhead ska band Inspector 7) and I were talking. Scarhead walks up and pounds his fist in the air while quietly chanting "Gay power! Gay power! Gay power!" We laugh, and Scarhead says, "Don't worry, I got your back. Mancini says, "you better." While leaning against a wall waiting for the signal of our departure I see Jeff standing across the room looking at me. I paid no mind. Suddenly Jeff strides across the room towards me. He stands on my left, puts his arm across my shoulder and says to every one in the room, "This is the man! This is the man right here!" All the skins who know me look on with beer bottles in the hands, shit eating grins on their faces, nodding their heads. "Yeah, Pedro's the man." We head up to the party. Mancini desperately looked for a camera to get a photograph of me and Jeff together, bottles of beer in our hands and arms across our shoulders. He wanted to use it as a flier with the word "unity" underneath. Alas, no camera was available. About two months passed before Jeff found out I was homosexual.

"What? Pedro's a poop pirate? No! He can't be a Fruit Loop Trooper! No way!" That's one of the things I really like about Jeff. He may not know a lot of words, but he uses all the ones he knows. And in so many ways! It really impresses me. He'll never use a term as mundane as faggot. Why should he when he has terms like "Butt Jouster," "Bun Splitter," "Bum Burglar," "KY Commando," and my personal favorite (drum roll please...) "Rump Ranger!" And to think some people collect Beanie Babies.

HE'LL NEVER USE A TERM AS MUNDANE AS FAGGOT. WHY SHOULD HE, WHEN HE HAS TERMS LIKE "BUTT JOUSTER," "BUN SPLITTER," "BUM BURGLAR," "KY COMMANDO," AND MY PERSONAL FAVORITE (DRUM ROLL PLEASE...) "RUMP RANGER!" AND TO THINK, SOME PEOPLE COLLECT BEANIE BABIES.

It wasn't long before Jeff and I settled things. Jeff arrives at a punk show being held in a garage in New B. Between bands I decided to get something to eat. As I walk towards the street I announce for all to hear, "I'm gettin' some food! I'll be back." I pass Jeff, who shakes my hand, but holds on. "Pedro, come here a second, I want to talk to you."

He explained that he sees me as part of the scene and accepts that. Then he explained his reasons for writing "Stay in the Closet." Basically it was a reaction to The Love That Would Not Shut Up. He was annoyed by flamboyant gay activist types and he wanted to piss people off. I was pretty sure he succeeded. "I understand." I said. "And if I were to put on a show and have you guys play I wouldn't tell you to not play that song." "That's fine," Jeff said, "'cause if you did, we'd do it anyway."

Yeah, yeah, I know. "What a dick!"

But I think after all these years I've finally figured out why me and Jeff are able to get along. After first meeting Jeff, I heard him talking to some skins about their forth coming album. The title is "The Right To Remain Violent." I thought that was pretty good. Then he mentioned a sequel to "Stay in the Closet." "Stay in the Closet Two; A Fairy's Tale." I laughed out loud over that one. Jeff is actually a very funny guy. I found something to like about him and I was able to relax and enjoy his company. But I also had unconsciously accepted the fact that Jeff is a part of the scene. We were going to have a relationship. It could have been one of conflict or acceptance.

Jeff is cool with me and hasn't sung "Stay in the Closet" in years. There was one show where Storm Watch played. I was in attendance and looking forward to seeing them actually play a full set. Usually, a fight would break out. Or something else would happen that would cut the set short. At this gig someone said they wanted to hear "Stay In The Closet." "I'll bet Pedro wants to hear that one." Actually I did. But Jeff wasn't interested in doing it. "I don't even remember the words." So Jeff gives the audience a choice. "Who want's to hear...?" and he says the title of a new song I don't recall. About a dozen hands come up. "Who wants to hear 'Stay in the Closet'?" just about every hand but mine goes up. Jeff did not do "Stay in the Closet" that night. Afterwards I approached Jeff. "Jeff I was a little disappointed that you didn't do 'Stay In the Closet.' I wanted to get up on stage and sing it with you." At that point I raise my shirt to reveal the t-shirt a friend gave me a few years back. Red, with the words, "So Many Men, So Little Time" in black letters.

Jeff has a new band, Combat Ready, and is working on acting like an adult. A friend reported that at a party a skinhead came up to Jeff and asked "Jeff, you want to go fag bashing later?' Jeff responded with "What are you? A moron?" Don't get the wrong idea now. In the last Storm Watch album there was a song where Jeff admits to having said things he may regret but will never apologize for.

What a dick.

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Frustration would be the best word to describe my feelings over the controversy surrounding Eminem. Not over what Eminem rapped about on the *Marshal Mathers* LP but from the response of gay organizations. Protesting outside the Grammy Awards, repeating over and over again that the word "faggot" is said 18 times on the CD was a painful sight to watch. To me they looked like a bunch of (excuse the expression.) whining faggots. But it seemed people who were against homophobia and sexism were at a loss as to what to do.

The example Mike Bullshit made sheds light on a real problem. Not homophobia, but a lack of diversity on opinions in pop culture. Another real problem is the level of discourse over Eminem. I felt frustrated watching Kurt Loder interview Eminem on the controversy surrounding him. When Eminem explained that his use of the word faggot didn't refer to homosexuals I understood what he meant. The word is used so often as a put down and a joke it's practically punctuation! I remember a drive home from a show. The radio was on and playing top forty sonic wallpaper. My friend, with a disgusted tone in his voice, muttered "Fuck this faggot shit." and shut off the radio. There was a pause, then he pats my thigh, saying, "I'm sorry Pedro."

Context matters. There was no need for my friend to apologize. I knew the context of the statement he made. My feelings weren't hurt. I knew the context of Eminem's lyrics. And I did not feel threatened. What I did feel was that someone was speaking for me and not expressing my feelings about the issue. Don't get me wrong. I think GLAAD does extraordinary work. The action they took on the death of Matthew Shepard set a standard for media education. But when it comes to popular culture, GLAAD is kind of clueless. The guy they chose as a spokesman said some important things. Unfortunately they wound up on the cutting room floor because they didn't fit with MTV's theme on "When Hate goes Pop." Then there's the choices GLAAD makes as to who would represent the gay "community" on TV. The standard pretty gay guy with the perfectly arranged hair helmet did have important things to say. But couldn't they find a spokesperson who looked as if he actually listened to rap? If it was a homophobic Broadway show tune or cabaret act the guy they picked was would have been perfect! But that wasn't the situation. For a group that's conscious about image, I had to wonder why it never occurred to them to send a person of color who was a member of the Hip Hop Nation.

The Gay Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) held a "Homie sexual

Hip Hop Panel" as a reaction to the Eminem controversy. You know what? The panel, made up of gay and lesbian people of color, didn't want to talk about Eminem. Why? Because he wasn't The Problem. Eminem may be A Problem, but he is not The Problem. The Problems are:

1. The fact that 99.999% of what you see on MTV is produced by five record companies and their subsidiaries.

2. That these corporate record labels insist that gay artists stay closeted. Unless of course they can prove that millions of dollars can be made as out artists. You figure that one out!

3. The glossy gay magazines (*The Advocate*, etc.) that will not treat out independent gay artists the way they treat straight celebrities.

It was great! Here was the discussion I'd longed for. After the Homie sexual Hip Hop Panel, I spoke to the man that organized it. After heaping praises upon him for his efforts, I told him about the Mike Bullshit, Bad Brains affair, and told him,

"If I had the resources that GLAAD has, what I'd do is put together a gay hip hop compilation. There are hundreds of gay rappers out there. Some of them are outstanding! You could get some label with a fag that's running it to donate the CDs and distribute them to radio stations. College stations would be your best bet. A lot of colleges have gay groups and Gay/Straight alliances. They could insist that the CDs be played on their college stations."

Why did I give him this option? Because the solution to hateful speech is more speech! Will GLAAD take on a gay hip hop visibility project? I don't know. Some how I doubt it, but I don't care. I saw it as a gift. They can do with the idea as they please.

But I think the "Queer Punk" scene provides a great example of how people can get along (more or less.) and learn from each other by being able to express themselves freely, as opposed to the corporate music industry. One of GLAAD's goals would be to see out gay artists on MTV. Considering the values of commercial culture this to me seems like a bad idea in the long run. So I'm going to continue to believe in the DIY ethic and the benefits of an independent network. For the gay kids growing up today and the future.

Pedro Angel Serrano, Co-Host of Generation Q, a gay community affairs radio show on WRSU 88.7 FM. It can be heard on the web on www.wrsu.org Tuesday from 1 pm till 4 pm EST. Bands that want airplay? Zines for review? send me shit to, Pedro Serrano / PO Box 1445 / Perth Amboy, NJ 08862-1445 ■

GIMME WHAM BAM, THANK YOU MAN!

JYM

Iggy sang "I've got a cock in my pocket and I am ready to roll." So was I, and if life were a spaghetti western, there was my theme song. "You make me cream in my Jeans" screamed Wayne County one night at Max's. Here was punk with spunk. Hit me like a rocket to my crotch. My curlicues felt singed. Could there be a lyrical soundtrack that affirmed my queer experience without the ambiguous bullshit? Gimme wham bam, thank you man! By the closing refrain of "If you don't want to fuck me baby, fuck off," I was clapping on top of my chair. A belated shout out to the Goddess of Wet Dreams. Accolades are long overdue for the progenitor of homo R&R. Keep rockin' girl!

I've seen the camps divide on glam and punk, but it was the first to assimilate us without bias. One could gender bend and show ass and sass. Queer DIY defies one to be prejudicial. My search for out and proud artists, even when not my taste in homocore—say, emo—gets props for taking the dare. That said, I favor punk as fuck "cock rock" with the emphasis on cock. Hence, my Iggy intro.

I have lived to hear the fruits of my labor. Stop snickering, I meant rewards. Self-deprecating humor, like tongue-in-cheek, feels good. Bring it on! I have been a queer soul since age nine, and always felt an inherent sense of my sensuality. When I want to connect with my primal side, my music has to be lewd, rude, and me nude! LOL. Extra Fancy's track, "Dinosaurs" has the line "since when was God a straight man?" This song sums up my personal spiritual philosophy, cuz he's not, to me.

When skater kids say "that's so gay," to mean "that's not cool," I relate. I relish the reappropriation of queer. I like being subversive. Gay is antiseptic, queer is anarchy. Who wants a homogenized homo world at Disney? Worse is "lifestyle"—it denotes choice over biology when used by our detractors.

Here is a flashback to my high school daze. From day one I wore a leer, tight pants, and my dimples well etched. I mean my cheeks, face, ah, forget it! It puzzled the low brows in low places, this confidence I had. Scratching their balls as I swaggered by, could've been the Cleopatra attraction oil I wore each day. One anecdote I sent Anonymous Boy's queerzine will shed some light on my "fuck me, but don't fuck with me" tude. So, this troll called me a faggot in front of his buddies and told me he was gonna kick my ass after school. I shouted "the only faggot is you, motherfucker! He who says it, worries about it." Dead silence, followed by his friends' laughter. Guess who was a no show in the schoolyard?

One hunky tattooed stoner and I found a mutual groping ground after sharing a joint one day in the park. He ended up being a frottage freak after my own heart. I dream about (I mean think) of him fondly. On the way to the cafeteria one day, Liza came into my life. Blonde harlot, glam punkette, she-evil, senior. Those rebel stone wall queens who fought tooth and painted nail for our rights would have welcomed her on the front line. I had heard the rumors, and she vice versa. Liza turned me over (out I was) to see the underbelly of NYC nightlife. There she was, teetering on platform heels at Jayne's set on the chair next to me. Oh yeah, did I mention Wayne is Jayne now? We obviously connected. Together we ravaged Coventry, CBGB's, Great Gildersleeves, Max's and the 82 Club. She took an apartment in the East Village where I was always welcome to crash and burn.

"You're gonna love this place, Jym," she said. Right she was—as I walked through the doors of the Ninth Circle, the vibe hit me all at once. Here was where the Bowery Boys came to play. I was in Hell and sinning through my eyeballs. The long bar was occupied by the paying hawks, but the coop was ruled by the chickens. Buck, buck, for a peck, my dear. Not one Crisco Disco song on the jukebox. In four years of deja vu, I was one of the boys, but not one of the boys of the night. The teen trade got the attention of the vice squad, and being Spunksville, USA, it wasn't long before the city fathers had it shackled. The back room (not that kind) served as a queer youth internet for us to surf. It was the shit. Only one bar gets the seediness right today, and that is the Cock Bar.

Yonkers had one gay bar, the Playroom, and it sucked. Just once I wished Patti Smith's "Privilege" (set me free) would blast out of the speakers and shatter the mirrored ball. To hear Iggy Pop's "I Wanna be your Dog"...damn! (Music update: if anyone has info on the band Until December, please email me! Thanks to Larry Bob's *Holy Titclamp* zine, I discovered Tim Cain's Boys Entrance, Gayrilla Biscuits, Homomilitia, and Sir. One bone of contention with the gay lib thing, what was with the Somewhere Over the "Rainbow" flag? Was I consulted? A black pirate flag with dick and crossbones would make a great queer punk flag! How about that, maties??

I witnessed the tolerant tone of punk dissolve when the fascist frat boys turned their self-hate towards those they perceived as weak. In their misogyny, women and faggots were soft. Now that's gay, 'cause I've always gotten my man hard. You could hear them: "What if one of them rubbed their sweaty AIDS germs on me?" Testosterone-fueled hardcore became the homophobic side of punk. Maybe when moshing, they worry about popping a boner against a buddy's butt. Jocko homo indeed. I am glad Limpwrist is flipping the bird in the cockpit, so to speak. Great stuff, guys! What a great porno flick that would be "Fuckin Oi! Butt Boy." All punk homophobes share one trait: to bash it out of others is masochistic denial. Daily harassment and teen suicide is of marginal concern in our society when it involves our community. Look who is not reprimanded: the normal boy who date rapes, but his parents say at least he's not queer, he's healthy. Enough of what makes me sick. Today, I have the love and support of my sister Donna, who I came out to first. I also give props to my best friend also named Donna, who has been patiently beating the shit out of Napster looking for my homocore fix...

In close, I'm a queer, no fear, and that's what I wanna hear! The band Turbonegro is now defunct, but I want every punk out there to grab the song "Denim Demon" off the *Ass Cobra* CD and play it loud and proud! Thanks, MRR for doing this thing for us.

Rock that cock, suckers, JYM, Yonkers, NY ■

BISEXUAL IN IDAHO

Terry Terrible

I am a 21 year-old bisexual male punk college student who lives in rural Idaho. As many reading this already know, being punk in a small, rural community is hard. But being queer and punk in such a community is even harder. Throughout my 21 years on this earth, I have found that being queer is not a bad thing, but depending on a person's situation and how they handle that situation, it can be one of the most hardest things in their life.

When I was six, my mom and dad got divorced and my mom went back to school to be a teacher. My mom, though I love her dearly, had a drinking problem for the next ten years or so. She would be all right on the weekdays, but on the weekends she would drink until she passed out. As a single child away from other family; I kind of raised myself through those years. It was hard since through late elementary school in to my early high school years I was a social outcast and frequently made fun of.

I had my first sexual thoughts, urges, and feelings when I was about twelve years old. I first felt only heterosexual desires; soon I was having desires for other men as well. I did not know what to do with these desires and they only added to other troubles that I was having this time. The desires came in flashes, for example, when thinking about a woman while masturbating, an image of a man would pop into my mind. Sometimes when watching TV or other guys at school, I would have sexual thoughts about them. In these situations I would quickly try to think about a woman or other things than the attraction I felt towards males.

THE MAINSTREAM MOVEMENT CLAIMS TO REPRESENT ME ON MANY ISSUES I DO NOT AGREE ON. LIKE REPRESENTED AS BEING "LIKE EVERYONE ELSE, EXCEPT FOR THE FACT I'M QUEER." FUCK THAT, I DON'T WANT BE LIKE EVERYONE ELSE, AND I AM DIFFERENT BECAUSE I AM QUEER.

My mom and family were not outwardly homophobic at all. Homosexuality was just never talked about in the family. It was not an issue that had been dealt with before. My mom is a non-religious ex-hippie with liberal stances on just about any issue. My own inbred homophobia came from the communities I had grown up in rural Minnesota, Nevada, and Utah. I thought that my parents and peers would reject me if I revealed my desires.

Strangely, I finally came to fully realize and accept my bisexuality through bi women. I eventually got to the point to where I asked: "If women can have same-sex relationships and it is alright, why can't men?"

I then started fantasizing about men and found it a beautiful, self fulfilling and empowering experience. It was if I had found a missing half of my sexuality, I had tapped something that had been unrealized deep inside me. About this time I wrote an excited entry in diary about this newfound aspect of my sexuality.

For the next three years I was able to keep the true nature of my sexuality under wraps. I read every piece of information I could find on the internet, in magazines, and books about homo or bisexuality. I didn't let the homophobia that I encountered everywhere in my daily existence get me down. I knew that my desires were natural and that was as equal as everyone else was, though other people wouldn't admit to that.

During Christmas break of my senior year of high school, my mom found my diary entry where I had written about my bisexual desires three years before. She confronted me about it and we had a long talk about it. I admitted that those were my true feelings at first. But then weighted down by the guilt she was feeling, I lied. I told her that I was only confused at the time and that I was sure that I was straight. My mom blamed herself for some of the worst things that I had through in my life, and thought that she was to blame for this also.

So I went off to college, still in the closet. The college that I go to is in rural Idaho and even though the college is a liberal refuge in the area, there is still a very homophobic air about it. I have come out to successfully to some friends I have made here, a few who are gay themselves. But I yearn for the day when I can live my life openly, without lies, bullshit, and being afraid of being assaulted for being who I am. The closet is a slow noose that eventually strangles all the worth there is to life.

I am graduating in May of 2001. After that I plan to go to a college in a moderate-sized town of about 150,000 people in Minnesota. The area up there is still rural, but a lot more liberal than where I am now. There are a couple of gay owned cafes and gay bars in town too. There is pretty active gay and punk community there as it is a college town. I plan to live my life as an open bisexual when I move there next fall.

There are many complex issues with being punk and gay at the same time that gay people who are not punk and straight punks do not face in daily life. One key issue is the general disillusionment with the mainstream gay rights movement that most queer punks feel.

Once dominated by grass-roots leftist politics, the gay rights movement has become elitist and is moving towards more and more moderate stances. The Human Rights Committee now dominates the movement. The HRC frequently buddies up with corporations in sponsoring gay marches, rallies, and events. This type of behavior is harmful in that these same corporations who once contributed to the homophobia in the US by firing gay employees and by allowing gay bashing in the workplace now have special "GLBT" public relations and marketing departments that cater to gay media outlets. Clearly, the message sent by these corporations is: "OK, you can have your freedom, but we'll only support it if you buy things from us." Buy allowing these corporations to sponsor events, the HRC is a partner in crime to the commercialization of the gay rights movement and hypocrisy of these companies.

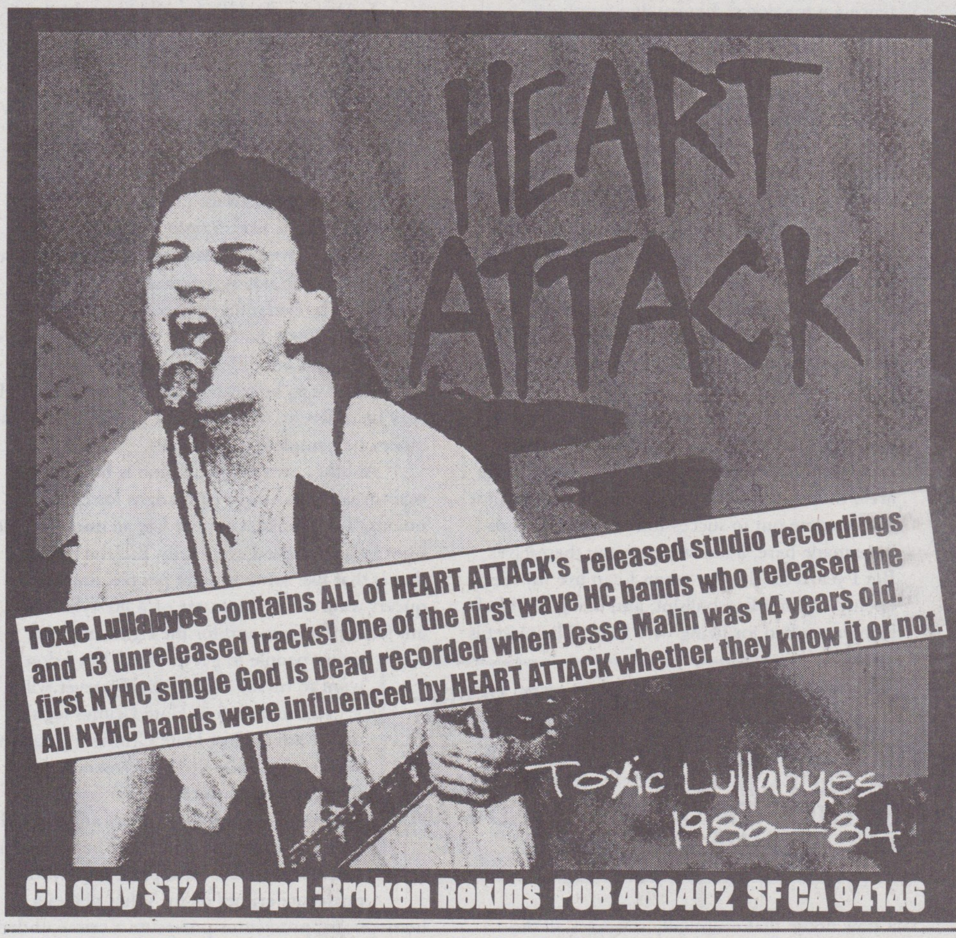
In Denver, the HRC teamed up with local police to patrol local parks to stop gays from cruising for sex there. It seems that the HRC wants to act as a moral police force as well as a commercial vehicle for sponsors. The HRC and other mainstream gay rights organizations promote causes such as civil unions under the guise that *all* queer people went to live a all-American suburban lifestyle like straight people do. The mainstream movement claims to represent me on many issues I do not agree on. Like represented as being "like everyone else, except for the fact I'm queer." Fuck that, I don't want be like everyone else, and I am different because I am queer. But I deserve to be treated equally even though I may be different, not because I may be queer but otherwise completely "normal."

Another area of contention is how the mainstream movement campaigns for civil unions. They make it appear like *all* queer people want to get married eventually. But the fallacy is that is that like some straight people, not *all* queers want to live that type of a lifestyle. Yes, I am for civil unions and for the rights of other queer people to get married, but I don't want to myself and probably never will.

Another issue is Hate Crimes legislation. I am against Hate Crimes legislation because basically the law prosecutes thought crimes, not hate crimes. Crimes against minorities and queers are covered under normal criminal law. The trouble is that homophobic local prosecutors won't prosecute crimes often. What makes a homophobic prosecutor prosecute a crime under the Hate Crimes Bill if he won't prosecute a hate crime under regular criminal code? The Hate Crimes legislation can be used against protesters also. In California, a protester who vandalized a Christopher Columbus statue is being prosecuted for hate crimes against Italians, though he was protesting Columbus's abuse of American Indians. In Oregon, a state senator is pressing to have anti-capitalist demonstrators prosecuted for hate crimes for infringing against the beliefs of capitalists. The Hate Crimes legislation is clearly flawed.

As a Bisexual, I feel that there is bias against me in both the gay and straight communities. Some straight people usually pigeonhole bisexuals as either just "fags" like all other queers, who are only good to beat up and harrass. We get branded in the gay community as either "kinky straights" who are not really gay or are considered closeted gays who can't accept that they are gay. It is really hard to go into a community that you think that will accept you and be rejected. But relations between gays and bisexuals are better now that most of the old stereotypes gay people have and wearing away with time.

That is my story and some of my thoughts on queer issues with punk. I'd like to close with a message to straight punk people: Open your mind and don't be homophobic. We're as human as you are and deserve to be treated as such. And a message to other queers who are in the closet: Don't be to hasty in coming out, take your time and do it when you're financially and emotionally secure enough. But for the sake of yourself and others, come out sometime in your life and live it on your terms. ■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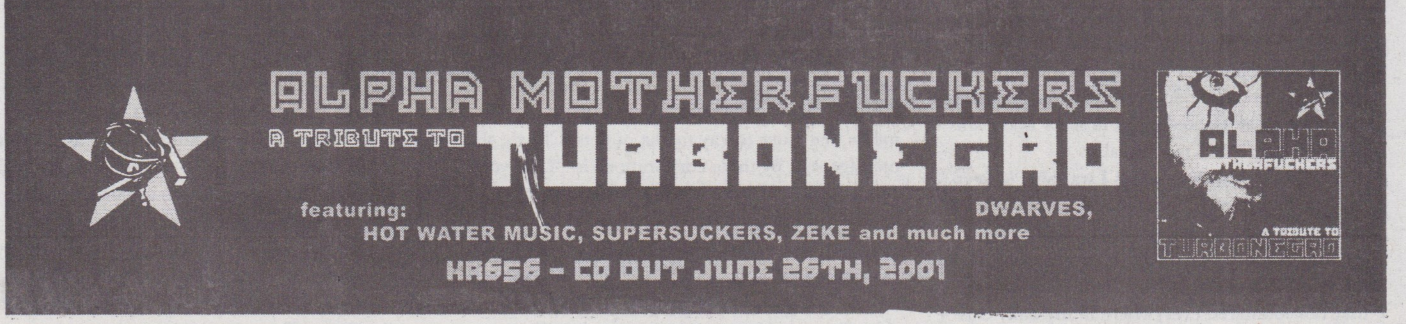
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BOOKS

The Crime Studio • Steve Aylett
156 pages • $14.95
Four Walls Eight Windows • 39 West Street, Room 503
New York, NY 10011

The Crime Studio's PR material claims that "If Steve Aylett were a filmmaker, he'd be Quentin Tarantino." Maybe, but I for one would like to give the man more credit than that. After a certain point, Tarantino's combination of repetitive style and self-aware smugness made me want to follow him around all day and club him whenever he gave the impression of thinking of his next movie.

In contrast, although Aylett is working with the same hardboiled genre and sending it up with a similar postmodern irony, the stories in *Crime Studio* lack the self-importance that ultimately throttled Tarantino's work. Aylett's stories are simply light fun, and because they pretend to be nothing more, they succeed nicely.

The Crime Studio is a collection of interlinked stories about the denizens of an urban area called Beerlight, and their generally less-than-legal interactions. While the setting of Beerlight is a clearly American icon, already mapped out by Nelson Algren and Raymond Chandler, the deadpan, absurd humor that coats the stories themselves is more reminiscent of Monty Python or Douglas Adams than the bleak nihilism that characterizes Tarantino. An example of the overall tone is the introduction of Harpoon Specter, con man turned lawyer:

"Harpoon Specter was a con man so adept at manipulating reality he could fall out a window and land on the roof.... His least successful shenanigan was to tell people unless they gave him what he wanted, he'd sit down and break his own legs, then roll around in accusational agony. Nobody obliged, partly because what he was threatening was an integral part of the average Beerlight cabaret act. But there was another reason. Because he wore stolen garments and went around demanding money, everyone assumed he was a lawyer."

And so, the leap from con man to lawyer not being a terribly great one, Harpoon Specter does indeed become a lawyer, using a combination of wit and bribery to defend some of Beerlight's more obviously larcenous residents in "the perjury room." The story of Harpoon's career in law is a concise exercise in farce that is equally absurd and real.

One of the strengths that Aylett displays in the stories here is that he knows when to shut up, a virtue possessed by few writers. They are all brief and to the point, most not exceeding five or ten pages. Aylett says all he wants to in this space, and then leaves for the next episode. This is an important point, because the oddness of Beerlight and its residents would probably cause any one story to collapse under its own weight were it sustained for any longer than this, the hit-and-run style lasts long enough to create a convincing sense of reality to the characters, but not long enough for the absurdity to become so overbearing that you begin to instinctively poke holes in it.

A more apt film comparison would be Chuck Jones, who directed some of the best Looney Tunes shorts ever made. In "Block War," the repeated efforts of one Eddie Slam to destroy the residential hotel (with its inhabitants) he lives in resemble nothing more than the hapless efforts of Wile E. Coyote to trap the Roadrunner via anvils, springs, catapults, and other convoluted devices provided courtesy of the Acme Co. Eddie's efforts are just as successful, and ultimately result in his own destruction, he not being quite so flexible as Chuck Jones's Coyote.

Other characters include Sally the Gat ("the first person to call her Sally the Gat was shot at such close range, the cops drew a chalk body-outline on the ceiling"), Brute Parker, owner of the local all-night gun shop, Billy Panacea, "burglar extraordinaire", and Ivo Beak, a local janitor and aspiring literary light whose efforts include condensing the entire tragic opera Woyzeck into a single haiku "to save people sitting through the whole thing." Each of these people weave back in forth in Aylett's mini-stories, taking various places on the stage. *The Crime Studio* may not change the course of literature, but it's certainly an honest and enjoyable effort. —Chris Hall

Evasion • Anonymous
288 pages • $6.0
CrimethInc Far East • PO Box 1963
Olympia, WA 98507

"Homelessness. Unemployment. Poverty. If you're not having fun, you're not doing it right." So claims the back cover of this travelogue by a vegan straightedger devoted to joblessness and adventure. Of course, if you're involuntarily homeless, if you're poor and responsible for caring for others, or if you aren't young and healthy, you probably won't be having fun with your poverty. Despite a near-total oversight of the privilege his lifestyle relies on, the author's catching enthusiasm makes for some lively stories.

The book is about 40% material from previous issues of *Evasion* 'zine, so the majority of the stories are new. The general threads are train hopping, squatting, dumpstering, methods of shoplifting (and otherwise ripping off big chain stores), and other scams. There,s also a smattering of hitchhiking, crushes/girlfriends, and couch surfing. The writing is crisp and funny, and for the first third of the book, I was constantly grinning.

Unfortunately, the structure of each account started getting repetitive. Almost every tale begins with a sleuth-like curiosity, checking out the new scam. He goes step by step through it, you can imagine him whispering the instructions to you, excitement building as you near completion, then BAM! High five as you get away with it! And

he goes on for a bit in delighted triumph! If not a bit of self-righteousness, even! Not a bad formula—just redundant when you don't vary it with any other style. The last two-thirds of the book became a chore to read, because the content and the writing remained very similar to the first third. If you loved the 'zine, or if scams and travels are your top priority, you may not mind this as much as I did.

The other thing that really got to me after the first couple chapters was the author's refusal to look at how much easier it is for a white skater boy to live for free than for pretty much any other demographic. I seriously doubt that most black folks could get away with frequent shoplifting. I don't believe that a kid perceived as queer would be given rides and couches to sleep on in the Midwest, or be able to live outside there, free from likelihood of physical assault. His enthusiasm and elation with his lifestyle run over into a this-is-so-great-everyone-should-live-this-way arrogance. His identification with hoboes and tramps, and his hopes that people of color will align with him ('cuz hey, he hates most white people, too) all get annoying fast. I got a glimmer of reality the one time he referred to himself as "the upper crust of transient youth," but that still didn't cut it.

What saves the book in this respect is the (editor's?) afterword about CrimethInc's objective. They emphasize that this is not the only answer to systematic problems, that yes, it is a partial and temporary solution, and they present it to you for whatever parts may help you find your own answers. Of course, most readers probably won't need to be told that it's ok not to swallow it hook, line, and sinker, but the closing statement gave me more respect for the writer and publisher. I do believe that most jobs are degrading and stultifying, and I heartily support a means to live without shitty jobs. And hell, if white boys from wealthy suburbs can use their privilege to get away with crime (that only affects large retailers), which may in turn inspire others from all groups to live better, I can get behind that. So dumpster this book if you can, but you might even consider paying for it.
—Nellie Nelson

Thank You I'm a Rock Star • Richard Turgeon
213 pages • $16.00
Xlibris Corporation • 436 Walnut Street, 11th Floor
Philadelphia, PA • 19106-3703
http://www.richardturgeon.com

Set in and around Philadelphia, this novel is about an underground band getting drawn into an oddball "corporate religion," called Autogod. Autogod is half Jim Jones, half Zig Zigler. From the first page detailing Autogod's "Growth and Investment Strategy," through the following 212 pages, Turgeon's story is gripping and engaging.

If the reader's been involved with any music scene, and I suspect all of the readers of MRR have, there are some recognizable characters in the band members, the hangers-on, the kids who... oh wait—it's a novel, and I can't give away too much of the plot. Still, Turgeon's characters spring forth fully formed. They either echo real people or are skillfully created out of whole cloth—whichever it is, he's an exceptional writer.

The plot is well-constructed, switching between Autogod's business plan and a fast-moving story line that starts out with a struggling indie band called the Movies, and Matt Baker, the leader of the Autogod organization. Sex, drugs, and rocknroll all ensue, along with humor, horror, and humiliation. It's difficult to review this in depth because I don't want to give away any particular plot details, so I'll leave it at that.

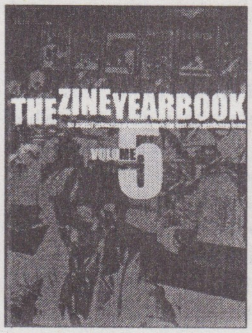
Outside of the book, there is a real world aspect of the story line that is at http://www.autogod.org. It definitely adds to the experience of reading the book—it's the first time I've run into this cross-media setup for a serious novel: a book and a website that's constructed as if the book is non-fiction. I'm sure it's been done before, but this particular website's combination of hype ("Autogod adherents" protesting Turgeon's publicity stop at a Philly bookstore) and supplemental information works very well. The music video/song and CD-Rom/music CD tandems are common, but perhaps the book/website combination will draw more people back into the world of the written word. I certainly hope so, because the formats are very complementary, to a certain point. The web is perfect for additional information that adds to the novel, and I hope that other writers take the same route to add to their written works.

(As an aside, the only thing I would avoid when combining a novel and a website is posting photos of the main characters on-line, I prefer to have my own idea of them instead of an image foisted upon me by a website. It's similar to my personal problem with music videos—some things are better left to each cultural consumer's imagination.

Being a Philly expatriate, I definitely enjoyed the novel's setting, although it's vague enough that it's transferable to Anytown, USA. Plus, the depictions of inter-band relations and of various loopy spiritual people are spot-on. One interesting thing is that the publisher, Xlibris, is an on-line vanity publisher, so I assume that this is Turgeon's first novel.

Overall, *Thank You, I'm a Rock Star* is head and shoulders above most underground fiction, and is one of a handful of first novels that's worth reading. No kidding, you'll be doing yourself a big favor by picking this one up pronto! —Jesse Luscious

The Zine Yearbook: Volume 5
148 pages • $8.00
Become The Media • PO Box 1225
Bowling Green, Oh • 43402



Anyone else notice how the media blitz on the whole zine thing has sort of died down? For awhile it seemed like every time you waltzed into a book store there was a new book on zines, about how to do zines (what the hell was that one all about?), or anthologies of your favorite zines in a handy mainstream legitimizing book form. The hype is over kids—which is fine by me, because now we're back to a point where the ratio of bad to good zines (always a a ratio which favors the bad) is back to a tolerable level. Think of this tome as the cream of the crop—cause it is—or better yet think of it, as I do, the best bathroom reading material since...uggh I don't know but you get the point right?

In its fifth edition now, *The Zine Yearbook*, could almost be considered a staple in the underground publishing world—and for those folks whose works are contained within, the honor of such could almost be considered equal to that of winning a Newberry Award (look it up). This is truly chock full of goodness, with articles spanning across the spectrum of independent publishing—though I do feel that there is a serious lacking in the realm of anything sort of

music related. In fact there are only two band interviews in the whole thing—one of which was thoroughly uninteresting. I'll give you a hint, it wasn't the one with Frank Discussion of The Feederz (which was nearly brilliant). Here's another clue in the form of a quote:

"My idea is that the Left and the Right are twosides of the same coin. Why don't we ditch the fucking coin? Because they are two sides of the same problem. You have the Left side of capitalism and you have the Right side of capitalism. Well, guess what? They're both fucked up. All the Left and the Right want to do is alter the face of capitalism. If the Left got their way, the cops would be using happy faces on the ends of their billyclubs as they beat you to the ground."

Excellent. Give up? Well looks like you're going to have to look it up, because if you haven't figured it out now I'm afraid i can't help you anymore. The lack of music coverage begs to ask is this more reflective of the serious lack of quality band interviews or more so a mirror of the personality of the compliers of this anthology. I'm more likely to go with latter, since in all reality this is just a giant fanzine about, well, fanzines, and most total zine geeks have this weird animosity towards total record/music geeks. But I digress. Making up for the lack of music coverage, though, are the plethora of heavy hitting articles from the likes *Rumpshaker, Antipathy, Ten Things Jesus Wants You To Know* and a slew more. Especially good in my opinion would be the interview from *Hodgepodge* with human rights activist Anurdha Mittal, detailing the interconnected and somewhat sinister relationship of corporate and our sources of food. It's very eye-opening, and should be one of the first things you turn to upon picking up this puppy up. All excellent choices and nothing I can really argue with as to their inclusion.

The back cover of this states "This is a book about zines. This is about recognizing the truly amazing stuff that exists in an underground we've created" and I think that is the best summation of this endeavor. This book is excellent because it doesn't try to tell you about the pseudo-sociological importance (which we all know zinesters came up with in order to pass their sociology courses) but it simply, instead, shows you how amazing and vital zines and the underground that they are reflective of truly is. By the time this sees print I'm sure production on Volume Six will have already commenced, and I for one know I can't wait. Totally essential for having any sort of comprehension of what all of this is really about. —Michael Thorn

Dear Mr. Mackin • Richard Mackin
198 pages • $12.00
Gorsky Press • PO Box 320504
Cocoa Beach, FL • 32932

Richard Mackin has taken that most American form of discourse, the consumer complaint letter, and turned it into a subversive art form. Dear Mr. Mackin is a highly hilarious collection of letters to, and responses from, a number of US companies. Mackin scolds the good people of Quaker, whose granola bars "may contain traces of peanuts," by sending them a page from a calendar of zen proverbs which reads, "A good craftsman leaves no traces." He writes to several mayonnaise enterprises pondering the religious significance of "Hell Man's" and Miracle Whip being archnemeses. He sends Kellogg's a haiku which reads "Kelloggs frosted flakes/Sugar coated mutant corn/From where does it come?" (I will step in as a literary nerd here and note that this is a particularly ironic use of this poetic form since haikus are thought of as nature imagery, and there is nothing natural about genetically engineered corn.)

Mackin's letters employ a host of different tactics. Some are haikus alone, which generally don't beget a response. In some letters, he sarcastically berates corporations: "Dear Shell, How does it feel to own Nigeria? When you have someone killed, do you just receive reports of it, or do you take active part, the way James Bond villains always oversee the killing of captive adversaries?" In this particular case, he then writes a response letter to the response letter, pointing out the doublespeak involved: "YOU DO NOT SHARE MY INTEREST AND CONCERN regarding issues involving the Ogoni tribe and/or other affairs in Nigeria. If you did...you would not be associated with murder."

But some of the funniest letters are the ones in which Mackin plays dumb about a brand or product: "Dear Rubber Maid, I always thought that you were a nice clean-cut company until I was in a 'novelty' store today that had a magazine that had lots of photos of 'RUBBER MAIDS.' It was pretty disgusting...Cut it out." "Dear Preparation H, I was just watching TV just now and I saw one of your commercials. In it, a woman checks off a list of symptoms (burning, itching, etc...) from a pad, indicating that Prep. H solves these problems. Who makes these pads? Please send me some." "Dear Lender's Bagels...I saw a commercial for THE MONEY STORE...The very first thing that was said in this ad was, 'Are you tired of LENDER'S dictating the rates on your loans?' What are they talking about? How does a Bagel baker control abstract finances and mortgages? Is this true, or is it an indication that The Money Store is anti-Semitic...?" Half of the hilarity of these letters is in reading the responses and imagining the poor corporate drones whose job is to issue straight-faced responses such as, "Unfortunately, the pad used in the commercial is simply a prop. It is not available to the public. In appreciation of your comments, we have enclosed coupons..."

Wow, free coupons for Preparation H! Hot dog! Actually, the doling out of coupons is the second most common response to Mackin's letters, after no response at all. Mackin's request for a 2' x 3' x 6' Tupperware container to be used as a coffin goes unmet. Unanswered also is his question to Keebler about how he could possibly be expected to emulate a "serving suggestion" picture involving tiny elves. But he does receive coupons for Ramen noodles, McDonald's gift certificates, and concert tickets to see Sepultura and No Doubt. (Whether one would want any of these items, even for free, is questionable, but still...)

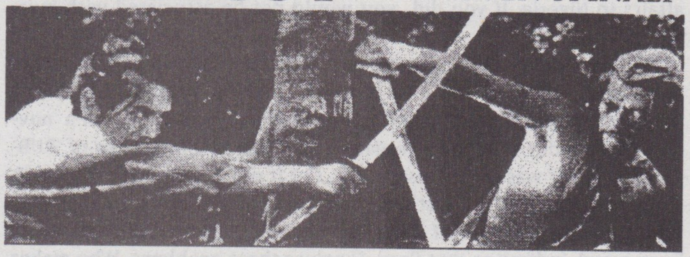
A good chunk of the book is taken up by Mackin's epic battle with the makers of Lever 2000 to find out exactly what "2000 parts of the body" their soap claims to clean. Form letter follows form letter from the folks at Lever, none of them answering the question, despite Mackin's various creative endeavors such as sending them a picture of a woman with an embryonic twin and wondering how many parts they think she has to clean.

After seeing all these form letters or "No Reply" stamps, people who write back exhibiting humor or other human traits emerge as unexpected heroes. One of my favorites is Spaulding Goetze, who responds to Mackin's complaint that several of his recently-purchased Goetze's caramel creams contained no "white stuff" by sending Mackin a kind letter explaining the lack of guarantee in the caramel-making process and enclosing a big bag of aforementioned "white stuff" for "those unfortunate bars which arrive empty." A sweet response, both figuratively and literally.

Reading Dear Mr. Mackin just made me remember something. At one point when I was a child, I noticed that all the light switches in our house said "Leviton" in tiny letters. Sure, this might have appeared to some as an innocent brand name. But I was convinced it was a ploy on the part of the sinister electricity industry to get us to subliminally think, "Leave it on." Well, I've sat on this theory long enough. Now I think it's time I wrote someone a letter. —Melissa Klein

MOVIES

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI



PERVERSE AND PROUD

Short, potbellied, and with a growth of back-hair so thick it has to be shaved before a shoot, Ron Jeremy would break any porn star mold (if only a mold could be built to fit him). Alas, in porn, you're expected to be gifted only where it counts, and Jeremy (a.k.a. The Hedgehog) found himself in a new industry at a time when anything was possible.

Those were the halcyon days of American pornography, the ones memorialized in Paul Thomas Anderson's affectionately loopy **Boogie Nights**. Scott Gil's documentary **Porn Star: The Legend of Ron Jeremy** surveys the life of a man who, frankly, should be more interesting than he is. According to the film, his main claims to fame may be that he's the idol of guys who realize that, if Ron can get laid, anybody can.

A ham since youth, he produced and starred in his own home-grown productions before he Bar Mitzvah'd, when he soon settled down to a career as Special Ed teacher for disturbed children (a disturbing thought). This was a creative dead-end, so he eventually took drama classes at William and Mary. While he got a few acting gigs off-Broadway and off-off-Broadway, they were never enough to pay the bills. Porn came as an accident, after appearing nude in a Penthouse "boy next door" layout; before long, he was getting phone calls day and night.

His size may be a matter of interest for some (estimates start at 9" and go up from there), but it doesn't make his story any more interesting. Neither does a recounting of the adulation of some of his on-screen partners, one of whom says she likes him because he's never hard—just sort of continually semi-soft, like ice-cream.

The more interesting material comes much later in the documentary. Apparently, Jeremy avoids all drugs and alcohol—almost unheard of in this cocaine-driven industry. He's had no major relationships, either, though it's clear in his private moments that there's a hole in his life that wears away at him.

To fill the gap, Jeremy has an almost maniacal drive for self-promotion. He's too thrifty (read "cheap") to buy a computer or a Palm Pilot. Instead, he keeps a cheap spiral notebook with ten years of contacts, all written in tiny letters, the writing like a network of synapses that covers page after page. The pattern continues with his monthly calendar, filled top to bottom, day after day with interviews, TV shoots, parties, porn jobs. He can't pass anything up—party, bit part, interview, autograph session—because he always has the nagging feeling that he'll miss something.

Like similar documentaries, **Porn Star...** is shot on video (which is almost fitting, now that porn itself has migrated from celluloid to cheap video film), and comes off more like an irreverent promo. The film is quick to note that whenever Jeremy appears in a feature film, it's a cameo, and he's always killed off early. (Scott Gil has assembled a montage of scenes where Jeremy is knocked off—usually gruesomely and at gunpoint.) And it's ironic that the best thing Jeremy ever did was a parody of him by Jon Lovitz. Ron Jeremy's talents may be be particularly broad, but with his boundless ambition, you get the feeling that the Hedgehog will always end up landing on all three feet.

Wisconsin Death Trip offers a look at a grisly episode in frontier history that's all the more compelling in that it's been erased from the history books. The source is the Black Oak Falls Record, and it's backed up by the classic cult book by Michael Lesy, only recently back in print.

It's the 1890s, northern Wisconsin. The country was in an economic depression, and the first to feel it were those with everything to lose—immigrants, poor farmers, coal miners. As writer/director James Marsh describes it, it was also a time of madness and death. This black and white film is actually closer to a dramatized documentary than a fiction film. The narrative is interspersed with period photographs and dramatized snippets of action just long enough to capture a moment of love, or carnage.

What happened in that short span of years is troubling even by modern standards. An opera singer moves into the area, but soon complains of seeing ghosts and apparitions. A woman travels from town to town, breaking over 10,000 windows across the state while under the influence of cocaine. A child admits to burning at least three houses and seven barns—because it's fun. A destitute farmer lays himself on the railroad tracks, content with death until three men manage to wrestle him away; another kills himself by lighting a stick of dynamite under his head. A teenager shoots a Norwegian hermit point blank while playing cowboys and Indians, then continues playing. A young mother, certain her three children are possessed by devils, drowns them and leaves one on the riverbank to rot. An older woman, fearful that she's under demonic possession, douses her body with kerosene and immolates herself. It goes on and on.

At times, the **Wisconsin Death Trip** seems like a collection of atrocities, differentiated only by their perverseness. Often poetic, it overwhelms you with acts of violence while and serenading you with the visual splendor of a withering frontier. Violence was maybe still is a fact of daily life in these parts, presented here with the matter-of-factness of your average weather report.

On the other hand, the horror of Guilliermo del Toro is not so much black and white as warm amber. His characters couldn't escape from their locked world, even if they had a key.

The Devil's Backbone is set in the background of the Spanish Civil War, with the sons of the killed spirited to an obscure town whose main ornament is a defused bomb, fins up in the middle of the street. Professor Cesares (Federico Luppi) is the distinguished elder of the Santa Lucia School with his crippled wife Carmen (Marisa Paredes), who suffers with a heavy prosthetic leg and and nearly constant pain, A new child, Carlos (Fernando Tieive) is unceremoniously left there with several bars of gold as payment. And from almost the moment he arrives, he catches glimpses of the boy who haunts the school, the person who's called "the one who sighs."

"What is a ghost?" the Professor asks off-screen. "A tragedy destined to repeat itself again and again...." Carlos consults with the Professor on the same question, a man whose study is lined with large bottles lined with the bodies of stillborn infants preserved in brandy and herbs. The Professor denies the existence of ghosts, but they both know better. These murky, amber bottles mirror an enormous vat locked away in another part of the prop-

erty, where the ghost is said to live, lurking in its cloudy, yellow depths. While the Professor denies the existence of spirits, both of them know better. The scabbed, bloody apparition appears ever more frequently to Carlos, whispering disaster.

As all this happens, the oldest orphan Jacinto (Eduardo Noriega), now an adult, is servicing the Professor's wife in the hope of using one of her keys to steal a hidden cache of gold. He claims he would have no problem killing everyone, adult and child, in order to win this small fortune. Enemy death squads show equal mercilessness in dispatching any local men who seem the least bit suspicious.

As you'd expect from del Toro (who also directed the intriguing **Chronos**), this multileveled poetic allegory is up served slowly and with intense atmosphere. As a horror film, it's more chilling than outright scary, but many of its most potent thrills come from the way he weaves together equally disturbing social and political histories. This school, a dark vessel trapping its victims, has to be broken to let those inside live in the real world. While **The Devil's Backbone** is by no means revolutionary, it describes the mechanics of revolution with remarkable power and artfulness.

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

A picture is worth a thousand words. People are always saying that. The truth is that a photograph takes on more depth when you are given a little bit of background on the subject. A couple of sentences connected to a picture can send your mind off on a bunch of tangents. **Wisconsin Death Trip**, a film based on the 1973 book of the same name, combines old photographs, newspaper reports, and records from the Mendota Asylum for the Insane to create an image of the what was going on in Wisconsin during the last decade of the 19th Century. When presented together, there seems to be many similarities to present day problems.

Wisconsin Death Trip takes a straightforward look at some tragedies occurring in 1890s Wisconsin. Black River Falls is a beautiful picturesque town that attracted a population of Scandinavian settlers. They were sold on the town before ever seeing it and their disappointment is presented as the catalyst for the events that take place. Newspaperman Frank Cooper reports on the loss of the town's children to diphtheria, the suicides of unsuccessful farmers, the Wisconsin window smasher, and other peculiar events.

The results are pretty depressing, but balanced with just enough humor to make things not seem completely hopeless. Fortunately, the Wisconsin Window Smasher, Mary Sweeney, bolstered by a dissatisfaction with life and fueled by cocaine, shows up quite often until she is eventually admitted to Mendota Asylum. This is the side of America that seems to be downplayed in our "proud history."

The photographs, deadpan voice-overs, and even the reenactments, create a very human mood. When a 13 year-old boy kills a reclusive neighbor just for the heck of it, I feel sympathetic for him even though I know I shouldn't. When he is pursued by a posse of law enforcement, I was routing for him to escape. The only thing that detracts from the film is the modern day, color shots of people of Black River Falls. Homecoming parades and the mayor praising the greatness of the town is something that wasn't needed in the film. The comparisons to present day are already evident. It seems like we are being beat over the head with it.

I guess the post-holiday time always brings out more of an interest in the morbid for me. **Series 7: The Contenders** is a parody of reality TV shows. The premise is great. People are randomly chosen to participate in a TV show that's objective is to kill all the other contestants. The one who's left standing is the winner. When you place people in a kill or be killed situation, they should act desperate and be ruthless.

The downfall of **Series 7: The Contenders** is the characters. They are too quirky, but in a stereotypical way. There is an unmarried pregnant woman (the series winner so far), an overpampered teenage girl, a middle aged nurse, a closeted homosexual married man, a elderly hermit and an abusive husband, father of two. It just doesn't seem to me that even randomly these people would end up together. I know most shows have contestants chosen by executives for the best ratings, but even then you get some pretty typical people. They always remind me of the people you encounter your first year of college. People who are away from home for the first time and don't know how to behave in a new situation. The characters in **Series 7: The Contenders** don't have that innocence and stupidity even when by every indication they should.

Dawn, the winner of the last series, is taken back to her hometown for next round. She hasn't been back for a while, but she doesn't feel nostalgic. She names off places and people as if she didn't really know them, but just memorized the stories. She goes to visit her mother and sister. The sister will not allow her in the house, there is a lot of yelling and then at gunpoint Dawn steals her sister's car. Now we know why Dawn isn't allowed in the house. As it turns out Dawn was good friends with one of the other contestants Jeffrey, the closeted homosexual man, in high school. I figure Dawn is supposed to be the heroine, but I'd rather she was killed first.

There's been so much talk about **Vanilla Sky**, I decided to rent the original film it is based on **Abre los ojos (Open Your Eyes)** to check out the hype for myself. Film types have been saying that **Abre los ojos** is much darker and I just can't bring myself to see movies with Tom Cruise, so this seemed like the way to go. Of course, two minutes into **Abre los ojos**, you see the immediate resemblance between Tom Cruise and Eduardo Noriega, who plays the main character Cesar. Cesar is a handsome man who has a large inheritance from his parents. Another man is running the company he is in charge of and he just cashes in. His best friend Pelayo brings a girl Sophia to a party. Cesar hits on her with no regard for his friend. Cesar is convinced he is love with Sophia. Which if he really was, he wouldn't have accepted an offer from an ex-lover Nuria to go back to her place. Nuria has other plans and crashes the car into a tree, killing herself and severely disfiguring Cesar's face.

I won't give away any of the big twists and supposed suspense of the rest of the film. I just can't seem to get past the fact that this man won't deal with his problem. Sure, his once-handsome face isn't that pretty to look at anymore, but get over it. The whole film becomes centered on his obsession with fixing his face and with his perception of how others are viewing him. How does anyone expect someone who doesn't have the money or good looks to relate to this character or even feel bad for him? He just seems pathetic. Then the big twist ending, just pushes this film into another realm of "who cares?"

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one send me a copy, c/o MRR, PO Box 406760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760.

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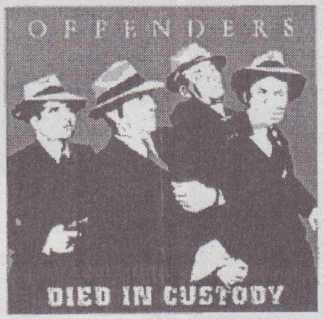

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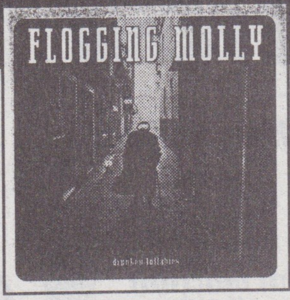

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ABE FROMAN - LP

ABE FROMAN's *Baltimore Is Scum* EP, from two years back, is in permanent rotation on my turntable, and after a couple more listens, I'm sure this LP will make it there too. With a heavy nod to CLEVELAND BOUND DEATH SENTENCE, along with No Idea/This Here-style scrappy melodic punk, ABE FROMAN still have crafted their own sloppy, screamy, smartass-but-wistful sound. Still, I have to admit I'm a little frustrated with this band—the balance they achieve between literary, political, and dreamy seems too composed. I wish they would let themselves go, be more pissed or something. I probably wouldn't miss it, if they didn't have heaps of potential. To be fair, the band acknowledges their need to break free of their influences: "Dear Mr. Elliot" is essentially a breakup song, in which they declare their need to "crawl out from that big shadow" of Aaron Cometbus. While I can't help feeling a little embarrassed for them, I can appreciate both their admiration and their struggle to get beyond it and come into their own. This LP is produced, like the EP, in total DIY fashion, and mysteriously pressed and shipped from some plant in the Czech Republic. (AC)

(7 ppd: PO Box 6393, East Lansing, MI 48826)

ADAM WEST - "Right On!" CD

Hard 'n' Heavy tough guy stuff. You're thinking, "Then, you love it, right?" Ya know, the Americans just can't seem to get this shit right most of the time. The Aussies, for instance—testosterone to spare, yet they manage to pull off catchy songs and funny lyrics ta boot. And the North Europe crew have style and talent we can't usually touch. While this band doesn't suck, they ain't what they could be. (RY)

(Fandango, 3403 Mt. Pleasant St. NW, Washington, DC 20010, adamwest@fandangorecs.com)

BARCODE – "Hardcore" CD

BARCODE who are from Denmark kick down 16 tracks of strong hardcore that obviously takes a nod from NY Hardcore luminaries MADBALL and SKARHEAD. Strong vocals and lots of metal influenced guitar riffs combine for strong release in this genre of hardcore. (RC)

(Diehard Music A/S, Vindegade 101, 5000 Odense C DENMARK, hardboiled-music.com)

BELTONES - "Cheap Trinkets" LP

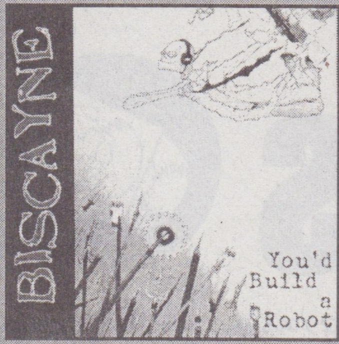
It's been three years since McFadden and the boys' last mini-LP. Was it worth the wait? Damn right! This is a cracking LP of raspy up-tempo punk rock. Falling somewhere between the STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, LEATHERFACE, and even SKREWDRIVER (musically, not lyrically). Hell, if Ian Stuart and co. had written songs this catchy, maybe the boneheads would have more people on their side! (TB)

(TKO, 4104 24th St #103, San Francisco, CA 94114)

BETERCORE/OLHO DE GATO - "Fuck the Borders" EP

OLHO DE GATO are hectic, fast hardcore with members from all over Europe.

Similar to the likes of SEEIN' RED and STACK. Quality stuff. BETERCORE features members of POINT OF FEW and BOYCOT doing LÄRM-style "fastcore." Blurs by you at lightning speed—but enough mid-tempo parts so that you can catch your breath. (MT)
(International Solidarity, www.noborder.org)



BISCAYNE - "You'd Build a Robot" CD

I think I will be hearing a lot of this kind of stuff in the future. This is pretty nauseating pop punk that is pretty obviously influenced by ALKALINE TRIO, the BROADWAYS, TUESDAY, and all of those Midwest bands who had gotten their sound from listening to a lot of GREEN DAY and FIFTEEN. BISCAYNE has the bad metaphors and the production of ALKALINE TRIO. It is Vagrant Records or bust for theses dudes with goatees. Me? No Thanks. (WR)
(Quincy Shanks, PO Box 3035, St. Charles, IL 60174, www.quincyshanks.com)

BJELKE PETERSEN YOUTH - "Stale Pattern Baldness" EP

This noisy hardcore thrash EP from Australia has all the DIY credentials intact. There are messages about the privileged few using their money and power to acquire technology, right-wing pro-lifers infiltrating punk rock, and rich capitalists brainwashing us into working at menial tasks to purchase cell phones and become "upwardly mobile." The fast hardcore music is recorded in what feels like a live setting with shouted vocals and a cacophony of guitars and drums in the background. This record is good n' raw with thrashed out atmosphere of a sweaty punk club late at night. The band has a good message at the end of their liner notes: "A record was never meant to cost more than it was originally purchased for, and is only worth as much as the message or emotions it conveys. If you bought this record on eBay, you missed the point." (BR)
(Devastation, PO Box 747, Fortitude Valley, Queensland 4006 AUSTRALIA)

BLASTMAT - "Theme for a Dying World" CD

If a melodic punk rocker and a metaller collided, the result would be BLASTMAT. Lotsa chunky hooks, but definitely a little of the long hair influence going on here. The music is strong, but the mix is uneven, with the singer sounding as if he were quite far away from the action. And hey, get over the religion thing already. We all know it sucks, but we don't talk about it all the time, so find something else to sing about. (DP)
(PO Box 380152, East Hartford, CT 06138-0512)

BLINDSPOT A.D - "Pain Is Not the Cleanser" EP

Intense hardcore from these miserable German fellas. Chaotic song structure moving from KUNG FU RICK style blasts through to heavy metallic breakdowns. Nine songs with hoarse, screamed vocals and introspective depressing song titles like "I Hate the Sun". It's all a bit much for me! (TB)
(Vulgar, c/o S. Priebs, PO Box 1535, 02605, Bautzen, GERMNAY)

BOONARAAAS!!! - "A Tribute to Bananarama" CDEP

All right, first of all a three song CD just irritates the hell out of me. Second, this is slightly out of key. Third BANANARAMA sucks ass. With all that being said you'd think I'd want to throw this away, but I can't. It's so annoyingly cheesy I cannot part with it! My new guilty pleasure. (BM)
(Thunderwoman, Thunderbabby, Masselsstr. 120-40599, Duesseldorf, GERMANY, thunderbaby.de, thunderbaby_records@yahoo.com)

THE CARBURETORS - "Burn Rubber/Fast Forward Rock n' Roll"

Gearheads, here's your band. If you are a one-dimensional grease monkey who likes schlock 'n' roll with lyrics that deal with cars or fucking or fucking in cars you are stoked, because this is the epitome. Knock yourself out. (DL)
(Sneakers, Almgrensy 9 A, 1621 Gressvik, NORWAY)

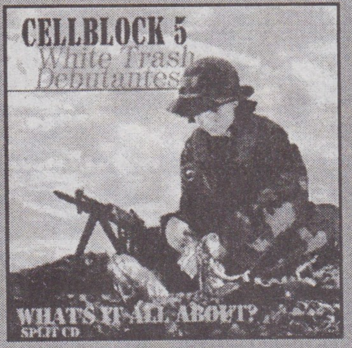
CELLBLOCK 5/WHITE TRASH DEBUTANTES - "What's It All About" split CD

CB5 are so Orange County it hurts. My guess is their bass player holds his guitar vertically. Real M2—thank God there's a number in their name so they have a chance in the "biz." Actually, it's fairly inoffensive mid-tempo punk rock, what you'd expect all the same. The WTD's or rather, Ginger Coyote and the lineup of the week, have been at the punk rock party a *long fucking* time! Long enough to name drop Joey Ramone *and* Courtney Love in their thank-yous (whatever makes ya feel worthwhile). Long enough that I spent my 21st birthday at one of their shows, and for some it was nostalgic to see them *then*. They are somewhat funny. The songs are catchy... fuck it, Ginger rocks in 2002! (RY)
(Orange Peal, PO Box 15207, Fremont, CA 94539, www.orangepeal.com)

CHISPAS/ALARM - split LP

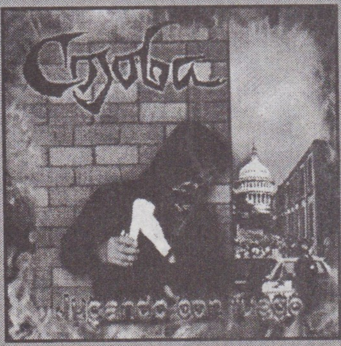
I wish bands like these would make it out our way more often. Disgruntled anarcho-hardcore that embraces explicit politics, like these two (I think they're both German) bands, is hard

to come by in San Francisco (believe it or not). Back to those politics for a second: I've observed, in recent years, a certain numbing effect caused by CRASS-lettering; do the bands really live their politics? But both CHISPAS and ALARM are clearly impassioned. CHISPAS, whose lyrics are considerately translated into English and Spanish, impressed me by capturing the angry and suffocating effects of being relentlessly sold to and pushed around. Their feminism and challenge to gender rigidity could land them in a school with the RE-SISTERS, HARUM SCARUM, and LIMPWRIST. Though their sound is rough, it holds a good tension and keeps the songs catchy. ALARM, though I can understand fewer of the words, is equally uncompromising: "Don't trust it/Fuck the American way," doesn't really get any clearer. Their sound is steady, mid-tempo hardcore, almost like oi at moments, with its monotone, gruff vocals. This split is the first recorded stuff from either band coming our way. (AC)
(Moskito, Postfach 101662, D-33516, GERMANY)



CIVIL DUTY – "Shit 'n' Piss" EP

CIVIL DUTY remind me of both ECONOCHRIST and the CASUALTIES, neither of which I think are anything special. Fast trashy punk with anti-society/government lyrics. Six songs. (AD)
($4 ppd: Voilent Reaction, c/o Ron Ramirez/ PO Box 902 / Artesia, CA 90702-0902)



THE CLASH – "Live at Mont de Marsan, 1977" LP

This is crap. This record almost ruined these songs for me except I was saved by the fact that you can't even make out which songs are which. It sounds like they took a live recording and played it on a stereo at one end of a warehouse while recording it on a cheep radio shack tape player on the other side of the warehouse and then made a couple of tape transfers before putting it to vinyl. You have to turn your stereo up all the way to hear anything and even then the volume goes up and down throughout the record. The best part about this record is the fact that it is a limited edition so with any luck I will never even have to look at the cover again. This is not even recommended for collectors. Please don't waste your money. (PA)
(no address)

COJOBA – "Jugando Con Fuego" CD

I wish I liked metal more. COJOBA play metal-tinged punk with a touch of peace punk in the vocals on this here CD. It is just a style that doesn't do it for me. It's a shame, too, because this Puerto Rican band has some right-on anarchist charged lyrics, dealing with everything from capitalism, the role of women in the punk scene, and right wing fascists, to conspiracy theories. If I liked the music just somewhat, I would probably eat this shit up. (JF)
(Anaconda, cojoba@prhc.org)

COLONNA INFAME - "Discography" CD

An Italian skinhead band from Marino who sound like the EXPLOITED do as of late, and love to say "Oi!". (NF)
(Oi! Strike, Paola Petralia, Via Oderisi Da Gubbio 67/69, 00146, Roma ITALY)

CRISPUS ATTUCKS/DE NADA—split EP

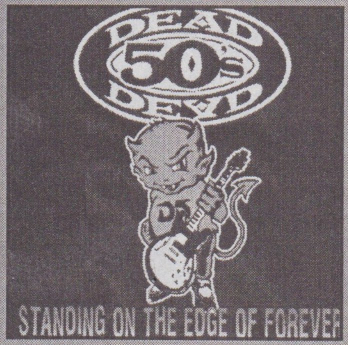
AAAAAARRRRRGGGGGHHHHHHH, CRISPUS ATTUCKS hits like a pissed off DISCHARGE-style fucking killing machine with hooks galore. ....AAAAAAAR-RRRGGGGGHHHHH, JESUS FUCKING CHRIST!!!!!!! This is the sound track to be played while sledge hammering Nike-Town, really. DE NADA on the flip side compliments the record quite nicely .....AAAARRGHHH-RUH-RUH-RUH!!!! This record is seriously relentless. DE NADA (a band from DC that no longer exists, too bad so sad) continues in the same vein with a little more fuzz and chaos thrown into the mix. Million-mile-an-hour bass lines and machine-gun drum beats make this border on the verge of a power-violence label. DE NADA is a sound track for destruction too, but more like the kind of music you'd listen to while destroying your old high school, rather than Nike-Town. Listening to this record brings me back to childhood. My buddy and I used to sit around thinking about how great it would be to take baseball bats and smash everything in our houses, TVs, microwaves, plates, and anything else that came in the way. It's just a hunch, but I bet the fellas in these bands had similar ideas, or maybe they developed them at a later age—like now. (AS)
(Vendetta-Berliner STR, 29 13189, Berlin, GERMANY, www.vendettamos.net)

CROSSFACE – "Cross Days" CD

Finally a decent CD to review. Of course when I saw that it was from HG Fact, I knew I was in good hands. CROSSFACE play rock 'n' roll style hardcore reminiscent of earlier DWARVES or some might say, SMASH YOUR FACE. Good stuff, though with only six tracks clocking in at about 13 minutes I could use more. (JF)
(HG Fact, Nakano Shinbashi-M 105, Yayoi-cho 2-7-15 JAPAN)

CROWD - "Punk Off" CD

The CROWD were (and are, I guess) one of the bands that emerged from the burgeoning Beach Punk scene, along with the likes of AGENT ORANGE, RED CROSS, the SIMPLETONES, and even BLACK FLAG...they've been around in one incarnation or another off and on since their heyday of '80-'81 (releasing the LP *Big Fish Stories* on the Flipside label, as well as assorted compilation tracks), and are now apparently a working outfit once again. *Punk Off* is a new CD with new tunes and old band members at the helm; all told, they sound pretty much the same as they did on the *Beach Blvd.* compilation, though there's a little less urgency driving the proceedings and age has taken some of the youthful shine off their mid-tempo SoCal sound. True to form, there's a track about surf oppression in HB ("Surf Ghetto"). (JH)
(Unity Squad, PO Box 1235, Huntington Beach, CA 92647, unitysquadrecords.com)



CROWPATH - "The Arsonist" EP

To put it bluntly, CROWPATH are the latest addition to the growing army of bands playing insane tech-core a la DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN or any other "new school" band on Relapse. Yet while I generally can't get into bands like this for too long, I actually enjoyed this release more than most DILLINGER copycats. The music is a bit more original, with a bit less tech and a bit more groove. The vocals are abrasive and consistent while the recording has this certain roughness that seems to captivate me. Despite the fact that this style is a bit over-saturated these days, this band is worth checking out. (SP)
(Scorched Earth Policy, Irisstrasse 19 67067, Ludwigshafen, GERMANY, www.scorchedearth-policy.de)

CRUDE B.E./RADIO SCHIZO - split LP

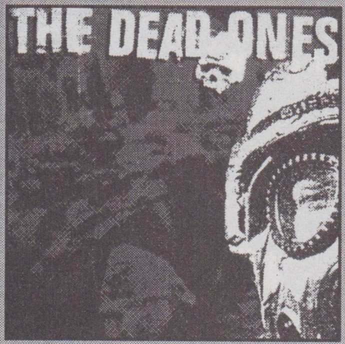
Two German bands that don't sound all that similar, but both have that Euro-Squat feel. CRUDE B.E. has the rolling Scandinavian thunder of HIS HERO IS GONE mixed with mid-90s German technical destruction of SYSTRAL and ACME. Punishing and raw. RADIO SCHIZO's German roots show in their pub-friendly street punk sound. Tuneful guitars with well placed horns, if you can believe it. A slight bit of the cadence from the SUBHUMANS "Day The Country Died." (TH)
(Merciless, PFS 601504, 14415 Potsdam, GERMANY merciless_666@hotmail.com)

DADDY LONGLEG/PETROGRAD - split LP

Fucking right on!!! Melodic punk rock with politically-charged lyrics attacking the system from both of these bands. DADDY LONGLEG play with more of a modern UK sound, while PETROGRAD carries the peace punk banner. Throw in a burritto and a beer and I could die a happy man.
(Falling Down Records c/o Infoladen Bankrott, Dahlweg 64, 48153 Munster, GERMANY)

DEAD 50's - "Standing on the Edge of Forever" CD

Now don't get me wrong—these guys are some talented rockers, but they're going about it the wrong way for my tastes. STONE TEMPLE PILOTS-like vocals, over produced, cheesy on many occasions... not for me. (SR)
(Smorgasbord, PO Box 5392, Millford, CT 06460)



DEADLINE - "More to It...Than Meets the Eye" CD

Upbeat Oi! from England with high-pitched female vocals. Not bad, but their song about what great skinheads they are is a bit too much: "I know all the bands' songs off by heart." Now is that what its really all about? (SR)
(New Blood, PO Box 52, Gravesend, DA11 9ZL, UK)

DEADLINE- "More to It... Than Meets the Eye" CD

Yes! On the new CD you lucky skins and punks get another burst of enthusiasm from DEADLINE!! This great band is comprised of two members of GUNDOG and two members of KNUCKLEDUST, and the combination works really well! Liz provides the strong vocals on the "More to It..Than Meets the Eye." CD and she is clearly one of the very best female Oi! singers. Herve attacks on bass guitar, Nic and James play excellent six string electric guitar , and Ray pounds the drums. Listen to the songs "On the Run," "Violent World," and "Hate Song"—all very good!!! The skinheads are still excited about the "No Way Out" tune from the *TV Dreams* EP that came out last year—the song is included on here as well. Get this new DEADLINE CD—you will not be disappointed!! (BR)
(New Blood, PO Box 52, Gravesend, DA119ZL, UK.)

THE DEAD ONES - "Vanmakt" EP

Blazing fast thrash from Sweden...it's really fucking solid, with just right raw production, great breakdowns, and strained screaming vocals. While I like this record (and like it even more on the second listen), I just can't get over the DS-13 worship. I mean, this could almost be a DS-13 record, except the songs are too long, and it doesn't rock quite as hard. That's not a slam,

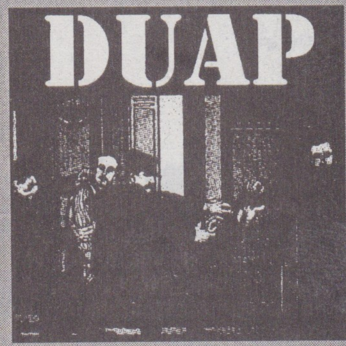
just an observation. Fuck man, even the guitar tone sounds like DS-13. But then, DS-13 is a great band, so I suppose if more bands bite their style, then hardcore will be all the better for it. Recommended...if you like DS-13, which you all should. (WN)
(Gloom, PO Box 14253, Albany, NY 12212, thedeadones@hotmail.com)

THE DEVIL IS ELECTRIC - "I've Never Trusted A Revolutionary That Was Afraid To Dance" CD

I'm such a sucker for raw, geeky, political pop punk like this—following in much the same tradition as their previous project, OPERATION: CLIFF CLAVIN, this is just wonderful. Quirky in an early Lookout! sort of way. CRINGER would be a good comparison, so would CRIMPSHRINE. Sincere and heartfelt lyrics make this a winner. Remember when "pop-punk" was still played by punx? (MT)
(Plan-it X, 5810 W. Willis Rd, Georrgetown, IN 47122-9117)

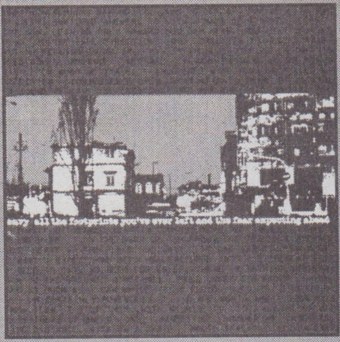
DRID - "Paid In Cunt" EP

Very basic early hardcore (like *1981* early) style punk. The whole EP, and there's nine songs, stumbles past in that non-thrash political party punk style that graced a thousand comp tapes back in the day (slightly before my "day," which is 1984/5). The songs come off almost garage at times, and it sounds like it was either recorded live or all at once in the lobby of the local hospital. Either way, this is a great punk EP that everyone should spend some of their unemployment checks on. *Quite a shame that they didn't include an address.* (RW)
(no address)



DUAP - "Solo Per Noi" CD

Proud to be skins, these self proclaimed "Oi! Rebels" from Italy are ready for violence and kicking some ass. They're anti-state, police, religion and against voting for a political party. They have such an incredibly striking, intense, and aggressive sound. All lyrics in Italian with translations. It's a bit macho, so no wimps allowed. (SR)
(Oi! Strike, via Oderisi da Gubbio 67/69, 00146 Rome, ITALY, soarecords@libero.it)

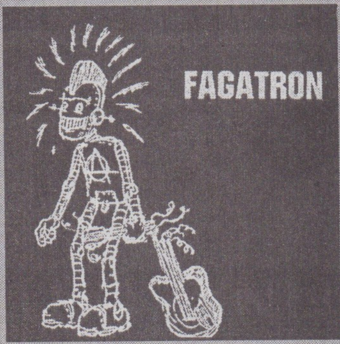


ENVY - "All the Footprints You've Ever Left and the Fear Expecting Ahead" CD

Third full-length from these Japanese masters of anthemic hardcore. The past releases have built sweeping walls of guitar far across the plains. Amazingly, the same guitar sound is pounded out on this CD, but is often corralled into much smaller landscapes. While the guitar builds and crashes, a high tone bass walks around the mess. This is a close call band for regular reviewing in *MRR*, but the drive and punch ENVY has brought out on this full length just slips them in. (TH)
(Dimmak, PO Box 14041, Santa Barbara, CA 93107, dimmak.com)

EXEKUCE - "Jak Dlouho Jeste..." LP

This Czech band's first LP brings us 18 songs of fierce, heavily DISCHARGE- influenced crust. EXEKUCE are full of energy, and seem to be exception to the millions of cheesy crust bands who we all stopped taking seriously a long time ago... while the rest of the crust world are adding more studs to their butt-flaps, these gives are taking care of business and raising some hell in the Czech Republic. (VH)
(Emergency, Chvalova 8, 130 00 Praha 3, CZECH REPUBLIC, http://listen.to/emergency)



FAGATRON - "Sex for Warmth" EP

.....two dorks from Olympia, WA......drums and bass only....but it works....the bass player carries......at first I didn't know what speed to play this thing on, but both speeds sound good.....listen to the whole thing both ways, you judge.....so guessin' from the lyric sheet I take it these two Buddy Hollies are pipe smokers....and anyone who knows me knows that I think fags be o'tay......punk hero Darby Crash died with a cock up his ass, that's a well known fact.....and it looks like FAGATRON are here to do bust-a-nut on YOU!!!!!...Jeromy and Abe are gonna come in your face this April/May for a tour....they'll have to stop by Frisco.....it's a MUST!!!!!!!!....oh, as far as their music goes.....crazy man, crazy......(SW)
(Low Vision, 21 SE 18th, Portland, OR 97214)

F.D.S - "Planeta Terra S/A" LP

High quality Brazilian hardcore from these veterans; sounding somewhat like HERESY mixed with a smidge of mid-period AGNOSTIC FRONT. Catchy and anthemic at times, blazingly fast at others—with lyrics attacking the international cancer of capitalism, the continuing nuclear menace, and war, among other things. Coming from a place where these topics directly effect your everyday life certainly adds a huge degree of urgency, and it shows for sure. This is awesome. (MT)
(Rødel, Keule Sternkicker, Allmendeweg 65A, 13 509 Berlin, GERMANY)

FLYS - "Waikiki Beach Refugees" CD

These UK folk circa 1978 were certainly a pop band with their mix of XTC, BOWIE,

and a dash of BUZZCOCKS. A great reissue that barely clears the punk bar. A mix of power pop, quirky pop and slow pop that will sit better with fans of the BUZZCOCKS, the UNDERTONES, and BOOMTOWN RATS as opposed to the leather-and-spikes crowd. Tack on the usual strong bonus tracks. A mostly unknown gem! (RL)
(Captain Oi, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND, www.captainoi.com)

FURIOUS IV - "...Is That You?" CD
Pretty decent pop-punk stuff with spirit, hooks and the usual declaratory singing style associated with the genre. Solid tunes, good band, reminds me of a bunch of different bands that I can't think of now. This record will feel like an old friend for those of you familiar with this stuff, whether that's good or bad, I leave it up to you to decide... (JY)
(Pointed Finger, PO Box 121462, San Diego, CA 92112-1462)

THE GTC - "Columbus and His Robot Army" EP
This is interesting... Screamy, chaotic hardcore laced with a few clean-channel strumming parts and a trumpet adding a bit of weird discord to the whole mess (making me realize that this sounds a bit like a lesser CONSTATINE SANKATHI). The vocals are very high pitched and at times are a bit too high pitched for me to tolerate. Then, out of nowhere, come these guttural low-end growls that seem to have no place in music like this. Like I said before, this is interesting... (SP)
($3.50 ppd: White Denim, c/o Matt Kosloff, 2247 Riverbend Rd., Allentown, PA 18103, www.whitedenim.com)

THE HARD FEELINGS - "Anytime I Want" EP
One original and a cover (FLAMIN' GROOVES) from this Australian band. They're really trying (and not succeeding) to do sound like the ROLLING STONES, or any other old rock band like that. It's a disturbing trend going around and I hope it ceases soon. Cause I've seen enough white belts and Greg Brady haircuts recently to last a lifetime. (NF)
(Dropkick, 38 Advantage Rd Highett Vic 3190, AUSTRALIA)

HARUM SCARUM- "Live in Slovenija" CD
Portland's very own recorded this on May 6, 2000 during their European tour. With comments in between songs, a lyric booklet, and a tolerable recording for being live, this isn't bad for fans. (SR)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie, PO Box 53, 34 400 Nowy Targ, POLAND, info@nnnw.pl)

HATE NO. 3 - "Crucified" EP
The image of some lanky Japanese kids playing macho, New York hardcore is just fucking hilarious to me...but stranger things have happened. These guys throw in a lot of new energy and elements, like unexpected fast and melodic parts, into the tough guy hardcore thing that surprised me. I can't stand tough guy hardcore, and wouldn't buy this myself. But, if there are any fans of the CRO-MAGS, LIFE'S BLOOD, AGNOSTIC FRONT, or Victory Records that will actually listen to any international hardcore, this is for you. (VH)
(Toshiaki Ikejiri, 8-1-39 Sumiyoshiyamate Higashinadaku, Kobe, JAPAN, 658-0063, www.kcc.zaq.ne.jp/h8n3/INDEX.htm/)

HATES - "Punk Rock X-Mas" EP
"Santa Patrol" and "Yuletide Riot" are the punker X-Mas tunes on this silly disc. Get a head start on a 2002 X-Mas boycott with two catchy, lyrically-biting ditties. I wish I had this last year. (HM)
(Christian Arnheiter c/o Faceless, 406 Merrill #1, Houston, TX 77009, www.thehates.com)

HELLNATION/MERDA - split EP
By now if you're not familiar with HELLNATION, you've been under a rock, or too busy swinging your hips at the bar. Pioneers of modern thrash, HELLNATION have been breaking thrash speed records for damn near ten years, and this certainly does not show them letting up. Six more songs full of blinding speed and mosh parts that make you wanna...well, mosh. Insane vocals that are beyond screamed; awesome stuff. Brazil's MERDE come in with six songs of their own, and in their own brutal, but still quirky style. It's like if a blazing hardcore crust band started hanging out with YOUR MOTHER or the BANANAS,, and if you're confused, that is flattery in the highest form. A record that is undeniably hardcore, but is completely fresh and original? Yes, please. (WN)
(2+2=5, Caixa Postal 1668, Sao Paulo/SP, CEP: 01059-970 BRAZIL, terror 225@hotmail.com)

HUMAN HAMSTER HYBRIDS - "Dance Classics" CD
These German goofballs play an earnest "hybrid" of metallic pop-punk (uh, the "human" element?) and ska (definitely the "hamster" part), complete with horns and English lyrics. If

that sounds appealing, you'll probably enjoy it because they're very good at what they do, sort of like an all-male Teutonic NO DOUBT. As for me, even the KIM WILDE cover can't save it. (JG)
(Media Dell' Arte, www.human-hamster-hybrids.de)

THE INDEX - "Indian Rock 'n' Roll" CD
Minimal information about this three piece Japanese band, but from their graphics, it seems that they've been at it for a bit. Totally distorted, this is a sludge of hardcore guitar, spastic pace changes and rousing breaks. Immediate toe tapping, even the slower sections were engaging and you could tell the hammer was going to come down. They used some melody with choruses and such, but it wasn't to any degree which deflected from the overall impression of speed. This strikes me as a band who would simply kill live, and leave the stage a wrecked mess. Awesome stuff. (TM)
(Outlaw's, 1-2-4 Komagawa, Higashisumiyoshi-ku, Osaka City, JAPAN, 546-0043)

IN DYING DAYS - "Life as a Balancing Act" CD
Super polished metal hardcore, with more emphasis on the metal, as is to be expected from all the clean-cut suburban kid "hardcore" bands with expensive gear and seemingly endless studio budgets. Meandering melodic leads over a never-ending supply of chugga chugga, accented by the predictable anguished screams and spoken/sung vocals about personal strife. A huge amount of effort went into this record (did I say record? I meant CD, sorry), and the execution is near flawless, but the passion gets lost somewhere between the multi-tracking and the guitar overdubs. (WN)
(One Day Savior, PO Box 372, Williston Park, NY 11596)

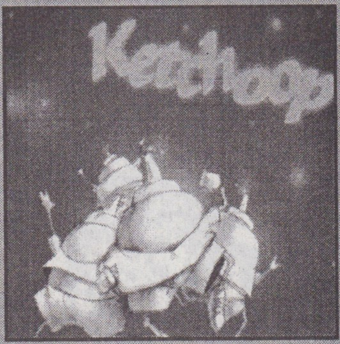
JAMES LOVES JACKSON - CD
This band has a definite AT THE DRIVE IN feel, which in new century speak means they play herky-jerky sort of hardcore without too much distortion and not enough speed, complete with vague quasi-intellectual sounding lyrics. Nine songs in under 30 minutes, with a 30 minute live set thrown in, making for a long CD. I get the feeling this band wears tight t-shirts. (OK, that was mean.) (JF)
(Schuylkill, www.phillyshreds.com)

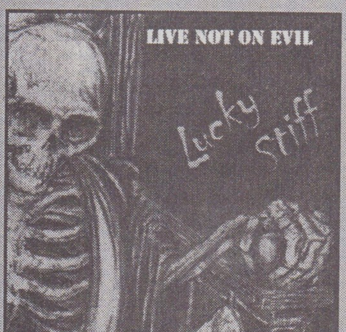
JUSTICE LEAGUE - "1983-1988" CD
Oh yes... What we have here is the complete JUSTICE LEAGUE discography containing the *Think or Sink* EP, *Shattered Dreams* LP, and the *Reach Out* 12". In the same realm as 7 SECONDS and UNIFORM CHOICE, JUSTICE LEAGUE's songs were completely heartfelt and melodic while at the same time incredibly powerful, containing that certain sound that will always stand the test of time. Oh yeah, and of course, members of JUSTICE LEAGUE went on to be in CHAIN OF STRENGTH. I will say that being a person who is not at all into straightedge hardcore of today (and not really of yesterday either), I will always enjoy these songs for their sheer quality and melodic power. For anyone who reads this magazine and for anyone who simply enjoys hardcore, these songs are an excellent addition to your collection. (SP)
(Mendit, PO Box 1096, New York, NY 10003, www.mendit.com)

KETCHOOP - "Really Lunch Are Two" CD
First of all, why do bands have to resort to use blatantly ugly computer graphics on their albums (this happens mostly on CD only releases for some reason)? It leaves an instant bad impression on me. This band is obviously influenced heavily by eighties punk rock, in the same way that NOFX was. They end up sounding like older NOFX with really gruff vocals. When they play fast songs, the songs aren't that great. When they play songs that are okay, they aren't fast enough. The highlight would have to be the really interesting lyrics: "Now everything seems the coolest, My hemorrhoids turned into one sweet caress." What a strange thing to say. (WR)
(Fragment Music, Apdo 2247, 09080, Burgos SPAIN fragment@argen.net)

THE KEVORKIAN SOLUTION – "Invokation" CD
This is an interesting mix of tunes here. It is wild blast beat hardcore with super intricate guitar playing that reminds me of HUMAN REMAINS or DISCORDANCE AXIS. And there is some weird electronic stuff mixed in between some of the songs, which brings to mind CREATION IS CRUCIFIXION. While I didn't find this to be totally mind-blowing it is still pretty unique and definitely worth a listen. (RC)
(Deathstill, PO Box 633, Dagenham, RM8 3AZ, UK deathstill.co.uk)

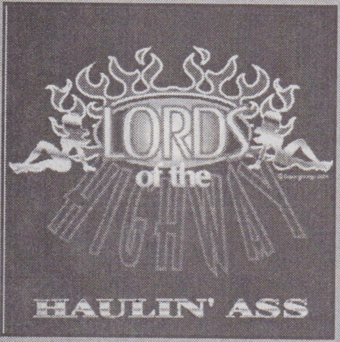
KOYAANISQATSI – "Lebenszustand der Geändert Werden Muss" LP
Great name for a band. I like the way just about every album released in Europe seems to be a joint effort between three or four labels, way to cooperate guys. Melodic-yet-hard political punk from Germany. Lots and lots of tempo-changes (not in a bad way), dual vocals,





hooks, energy (not in a bad way), and emotion (not in a bad way.) Good intelligent lyrics deal with anti-fascism, Euro-capitalism, work schemes, war (of course), and punk scene. This is really good, put it on, make coffee, read the booklet. (AD)
(Falling Down, c/o Infoladen bankrott, Dahlweg 64, D-48153 Munster, GERMANY)

LAWRENCE ARMS - "Apathy and Exhaustion" CD
Graduates from Asian Man Records onto Fat, these guys without a doubt sound like JAWBREAKER and when they mix it up they sound like JETS TO BRAZIL. These guys must sport Blake tattoos or something. But this is also a strong catchy powerful release that is easily the best thing Iíve heard from these guys. This Chicago trio certainly has got it working right here. (RL)
(Fat Wreck Chords, www.thelawrencearms.net)



LIL' BUNNIES - "50 Children's Favorites" LP
The debut LP from this Sacto band that at one time topped both the cover of this rag as well as the *Rolling Stone* alternative charts. Yep, the LIL' BUNNIES LP is finally here and all I can say is thank god that it's a 45 rpm player. If it was a 33 they might decide to put more music on this thing, and that wouldn't be a good thing. It seems like a LIL' BUNNIES LP is sort of like diet soda, good concept but shitty results (JF)
(Rockin' Bones, Pagani Gualtiero, Piazalle Della Macina, 3, 43100 Parma, ITALY)

LIVE NOT ON EVIL - "Lucky Stiff" CD
Completely competent and utterly shrug-worthy doom-lite. Good equipment plus interactive CD plus good playing plus indifferent songwriting equals "eh." (RW)
(no address,www.simplyfiendish.com/livenotonevil)

THE LEWD - "Lewd Conduct In a Public Place!" LP
Yes, I know, this quite spiffy live punk spew was reviewed not too long ago. But this is the NEW! IMPROVED! version with spiffiness quotient increased by the inclusion of three bonus tracks from a 1980 demo session, to wit, "(Go to Hell in) Hollywood" (same version as on that double LP LEWD collection, I thinks, but good luck finding that at this point), "Dressed in Black" and "Mobile Home." And it's a domestic release instead of a fancy import, making it an excellent value for careful shoppers. (DD)
(Vampir/Subterranean, PO Box 2530, Berkeley, CA 94702, www.subterranean.org)

LORDS OF THE HIGHWAY - "Haulin' Ass" CD
Surfy rockabilly. Pretty straightforward with the usual themes. Nice cover of MISFITS "Hollywood Babylon" with female vocals. (CK)
(Mother Truckin Tunes, no address)

LOWER CLASS BRATS - "Real Punk Is An Endangered Species" LP
Hell yes! THE LOWER CLASS BRATS, the top dawg Oi! and punk outfit from Austin, Texas have a beautiful new 12" picture disc out on Punk Core Records from Middle Island, New York. This magnificent package contains some songs that you may own on other releases, but the sheer joy of holding this thick Czech Republic pic-disc and admiring Marty's mug is worth the price of admission! The record contains "Safety Pinned and Sick," "Who Writes Your Rules (For Rebellion)," "Bite the Bullet," "Ultra Violence," "Background Music," "Orphans Don't Run," and many more classic "LOWER CLASS BRATS Army" anthems. Anybody who can't appreciate this great punk band doesn't have a goddamn punk bone in their body! The 'BRATS would "Rather Be Hated Than Ignored"—no way around it—you can't ignore these ornery fucks! (BR)
(Punk Core, PO Box 916, Middle Island, NY 11953)

MT. TAI - "Worms" EP
Two songs of powerful BLACK FLAG style hardcore and two covers (BAD BRAINS and MOTORHEAD, neither doing the original justice). They are veterans of the Detroit punk scene, and the music has that intangible quality of people who know what they're doing. It's a chunky, metallic sound which isn't helped by what sounds like double-bass drumming in places. Sounds promising, but I'd have liked to have heard more originals. The cover art is awful. (AM)
(Mt. Tai, 1131 W. Warren Suite 314, Detroit, MI 48210 Mt_tai@hotmail.com)

MACH PELICAN—"Kim Salmon Sessions" EP
Pure Australian melodic pop bliss in two songs or less. This EP's got one original, a romance tune called "Airport," and one cover. The cover "Last Night," well chosen, belongs to another legendary Australian band the SCIENTISTS. This is truly great. The SCIENTISTS meet CHEAP TRICK. (AS)
(Corduroy, 38 Advantage Road, Highett VIC 3190, AUSTRALIA, www.corduroy.com.au)

MISFITS - "Necronomicon" LP

This is a live recording from a MISFITS show from December 23, 1981 in New Jersey. I guess you can justify bad quality live records as a documentation of something that shouldn't be forgotten. Personally, I don't get too much out of listening to this one. It is a lot of fun listening to MISFITS songs, but I'd rather hear the versions recorded as they were meant to be. As far as quality, this is probably about as good as it gets for twenty one year old live recordings. Basically, if you dig listening to Doyle unsuccessfully try to tune his guitar, the bass dropping out, or Glenn Danzig saying "warter" instead of "water," this record is for you. Only the biggest tool will hunt this down. (WR)
(no address)

MOROSE/NARCOSIS - split EP

MOROSE lay waste with a distorted wall-of-grind and noise combined with some relentless drumming. All that mayhem combined with the fierce vocals makes for a good listen. NARCOSIS on the other hand follow a similar pattern, but throw in a few more tempo changes. They fucking blaze past like there is no tomorrow, and kind of remind me of DISCORDANCE AXIS. Especially the high-pitched larynx shredding vocals. An awesome release! (RC)
(Deathstill, PO BOX 633, Dagenham, RM8 3AZ UK)

MORTE CEREBRALE - "Omni Regis Glans" EP

The Norwegian band MORTE CEREBRALE has a six song EP filled with guitar attacks, gruff singing, powerful drumming and solid bass playing. The lyrics are political and lean to the anarcho- left. The EP is "dedicated to all those who stick out their neck in the fight against oppression." The subject matter of the songs covers Television as God, Christmas as a capitalist rip-off, the ruling class controlling 85% of the population, Mattel's "Barbie" as the impetus for silicon breasts and eating disorders, and encouraging kids to have their own opinions. This punk music is reasonably fast and chaotic, well played, and pretty goddamn heavy! For your copy of MORTE CEREBRALE's rough and tumble political punk EP contact: (BR)
(Pobel Records, Liabakken 14, 1529 Moss, NORWAY)

THE MUDDLERS - "7 Steps To Total Failure" EP

Here's some Ramonse-ified garage punk from Italy. The MUDDLERS are three chord wonders playin' that super-high treble guitar with gobs of enthusiasm just like everybody else. (DL)
(Be Nice To Mommy, theguru@punkmail.com)

MUTANTS - "Fun Terminal" CD

What we have here is a part of SF punk history that may never translate well onto CD. SF's great art punk band from 1977 or so. These guys and gals put on a freak show with props and costumes that left all others behind. A great punk band too. Where as more serious bands like the DILS and the AVENGERS were captured on vinyl, this band always suffered from soft production. This includes their LP, the 415 single, the DEAF CLUB comp tracks, and some great demo tracks. A part of Mabuhay history that shouldn't be overlooked, a great release to me and hopefully to punk historians as well.
(RL)
(White Noise, 537 SE Ash Street, Suite 400, Portland, OR 97214)

THE NAZIS FROM MARS/THE FOREHEADS - split EP

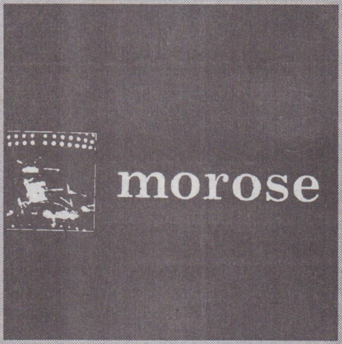
THE NAZIS FROM MARS are elecronic pop from The Netherlands. Their songs are repetitive with brain-dead lyrics, music made for dancing. The FOREHEADS are a three-piece from New Orleans. They have a tuba, drums, and guitar. They play sloppy, stream-of-consciousness marching songs that bring back memories of when I was a kid and I used to play at the dump. I like them, the music is simple and original, seemingly innocent but with interesting content. (JT)
(no address)

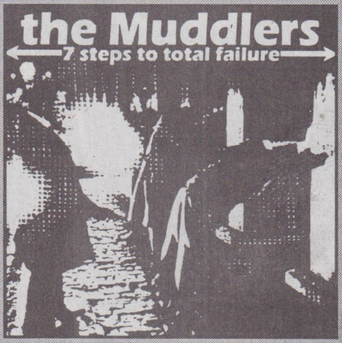
NINE SHOCKS TERROR - "Zen and the Art of Beating Your Ass" LP

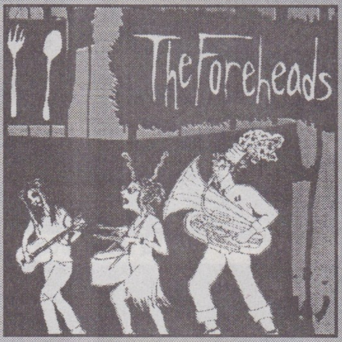
Reissue of the LP originally released in 1998 on Devour Records. As a side note, this is the original mix, not the "processed & compressed" version which was used on the Devour pressing. This sounds awesome—full impact. As you're probably already aware, NINE SHOCKS TERROR specialize in short, animated and angry hardcore—there's nothing extraneous about their songwriting. To the point, unmistakably antagonistic, and unapologetically political. Another hardcore band for the ages. (TM)
(Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

NOT ENOUGH - "Old School Hardcore" EP

Kinda like the title would suggest, they play really straight-forward hardcore punk rock. This (eight-song) EP reminds me a bit of SICK OF IT ALL's first record. Not bad. (NF)
(Horror Business c/o David Zolda, Im Drubbel 6, 44534 Lunen, GERMANY)







ONE MAN SHOW LIVE - "Wrong Wrong Wrong" EP

Hard rockin' bloozy garage punk band from LA seems to drink from the same dirty well as POISON 13 and the LORD HIGH FIXERS, and that's not just critical shorthand because Tim Kerr produced the record. You could actually mistake moments on this for other Young Lions Conspiracy groups and that ain't necessarily a bad thing. With a BO DIDDLEY-ized RICHARD HELL cover and two fine, fine originals. Great stuff for fans of the anti-genre and everybody else who likes rock'n'roll. (JG)
(Goodbye Boozy, via Villa Pompetti, 147 - 64020 S. Nicolo (TE), ITALY)

ORANGE SUNSHINE - "Homo Erectus" LP

OK, generally speaking, when yer looking at a 3-D cover with a VILLAGE PEOPLE-style personnel lineup (Jesus™, Hippie™, and Soldier™) posed on a tank, you know you can only go two ways: total suck or naive genius. They threw me a curve: it's just uninspired Man's Ruin-style wah-wah punkeroo wankeroo. And you know what they say about average records: you play 'em as often as shitty ones: never. (RW)
(Motorwolf, Schouwburgstraat 2, 2511 VA The Hague, NETHERLANDS)

PAINDRIVER - "This Has No End" CD

Probably one of the most underrated bands of the '90s. This CD contains their LP which came out in 1998 and it still smokes as much now as it did then. Total SIEGE meets DEEP WOUND going on here. For you younger folx, think a more pissed-off VOORHEES. Too bad the the thrash wagon wasn't really rolling through town four years ago, or else these guys would have been huge—as they should have been. (MT)
(SOA, Via Oderisi Da Gubbio 67/69, 00146 Roma, ITALY, www.soarecords.com)

PAPPA NIKOLAU - " Guerras E Religioes" CD

At times, PAPPA NIKOLAU sound a bit late 80's-era EXPLOITED, while at other times (whether they like it or not) they're leaning towards a SoCal hardcore sound (although they're from Brazil). They don't do it bad, but these bands are a dime a dozen. (NF)
(Rotten, Caixa Postal 781, Maua-SP Cep: 09380-979, BRAZIL)

PATTERN - "No Caress" EP

Wow, nice thick recording on this '60s-infused post-emo hard rock attaque. Whine with soul. Songs are kinda plodding; nothing manic or particularly brooding, maybe 'cause the guitar is buried under the bass. Oh well. (RW)
(Witchita, PO Box 27754, London, E5 OFP, UK)

PETROGRAD - "ABC" LP

This eclectic record is a benefit for the ABC Innsbruck. A very mellow mix of sounds with male and female vocals. This is a really "artsy" DIY production, so beware. I love it, but I can see how it could be too mellow and "spacey" with too much down time for some. I wish my copy wasn't missing the booklet! An excellent DIY project. (SR)
(Out of Step, no address)

PEZZ - "Drifting Away" EP

PEZZ delivers emotion laden hardcore with poetic lyrics. (Beware: there are references to a god.) The tempo shifts throughout "Drifting Away," add to the moodiness of the track. The track "Broke in Two" diverges quite a bit from the other two with more of a rock 'n' roll feel to it. Good sounds, but I was warned about their godliness. (SR)
(Soul Is Cheap, PO Box 11552, Memphis, TN 38111, pezz1@aol.com)

PEZZ - "With Everything We Got" CD

These guys have been around a while. Back on a local label (to them) after a stint with BYO, I believe, they crank out some decent emo-esque pop punk. These guys used to be more straight pop punk, but here they mix it up a bit. This is pretty good, although nothing earth-shaking. These are hard times on the pop front, after all. I think these guys like the GET UP KIDS too. (RL)
(Soul Is Cheap, PO Box 11552, Memphis, TN 38111, pezz1@aol.com)

POCKET GENIUS - "Tundra Rock" CD

From the ashes of the PORCELAIN BOYS, these guys crank out some good poppy punk in the vein of the DOUGHBOYS and ARMCHAIR MARTIAN. Although not the rock solid release that these bands tend to put out, this still has more than a few moments. A band to definitely to keep an ear out for now and in the future. (RL)
(Boss Tuneage, PO Box 74, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2WB, ENGLAND)

POINT OF FEW/MIHOEN - split EP

Both bands here pound out awesome thrashy hardcore. The songs are all fast, short and to the point. The MIHOEN side was just a tad stronger in my opinion, but POINT OF FEW can

definitely hold their own. And it all comes in some cool packaging with a nice little lyrics booklet. This release is well worth checking out. (RC)
($6 ppd: Kick N' Punch, PO Box 578, 2200 KBM N. DENMARK)

POTOMAC - "If We Take Notice or Not" 2xEP

I'm always a little skeptical over whether the double EP is a good format or not, as there is a certain amount of effort required on the part of the listener to partake in the entire release. All that aside, POTOMAC do the format a bit of justice with eight carefully crafted, hard-hitting tracks and a sound similar to a less-hectic ASSFACTOR or even HEROIN. A couple of the songs really stand out as being superior to the rest ("Memories" being my favorite on the release), while others seem to lack a certain something. Either way, I would definitely recommend this release simply for the explosive nature of the songs as a whole. (SP)
(Hombre-Lobo, c/o Bert Blees, Kaiserslauterer Str. 11, D-66123 Saarbrucken, GERMANY, Hombre-Lobo@web.de)

PRODUCT - "Nothing Has Changed" LP

PRODUCT from Italy blast out twelve no-frills songs of fast straight-edge hardcore. One thing that I liked about this record is that the recording was just a touch rough around the edges. It is a nice change of pace from all the over-produced hardcore records floating around today. Their lyrics touch on animal rights, being straightedge and other things of that nature. Apparently this record is limited to 100 copies so good luck. (RC)
(Head On, Via S. Cristoforo, 12-36061 Bassano, ITALY)

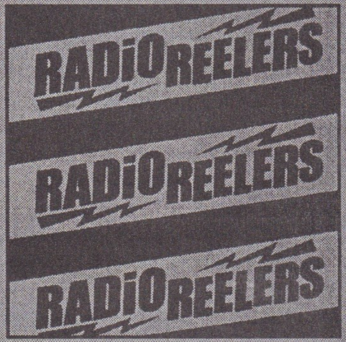
PROJECT GRIZZLY/D.O.O.D. - split EP

PROJECT GRIZZLY just pummeled me with five crusty power violence (is it still OK to use that term?) songs about the internet, mainstream media, and corporate medicine. Growls and screams, blast beats and groin blasting guitars, the shit leaves you in a heap before their side is even over. And D.O.O.D. is more of the same, except it's even faster. Song title of the month goes to "Don't Wash Your Hands, The X Will Fade," and the AGNOSTIC FRONT cover is not half bad. If you feel like being absolutely crushed, then your money is safe with this split. It's also available through Agitate 96 Records in LA. (WN)
(Sounds of Revolution, 1620 George Ave., Windsor, Ontario, N8Y 2Y6 CANADA)

RPG 7 - "Hateweek" EP

RPG 7 plays crusty metal hardcore. There are not a lot of guitar solos, luckily, but the double bass drum pedal is constantly moving. The lyrics are inspired by modern political issues, and the idea of resistance against the system. Alright! (WR)
(Giftzwerg, Bauerngasse 89, 97421 Schweinfurt GERMANY mail@gift-zwerg.de)

RADIO REELERS - "Radio Feelin'" EP



I love ZVA! I have yet to hear a record that sucks on this label. The raucous energy of the RADIO REELERS is just what I need to bring me out of my winter doldrums and get me pogoing all over my stuffy apartment. This has the feel of old rockabilly, but the speed necessary to fuck shit up. (DP)
(ZVA, 1816 E. 3rd Ave, Vancouver, BC, CANADA V5N 1H2, www.zaxxonvirileaction.com)

RED HOT SECRET - "Prosthetic Heart" EP

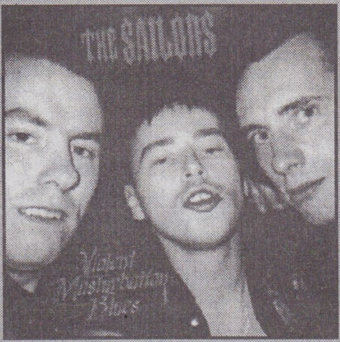
The sounds on these three tracks come from nothing other than a drum kit, guitar, and vocal cords played by two New York City females. "The Last Act" is definitely the strongest track, with emotion-filled vocals and an excellent combination of rock 'n' roll sounds from just two instruments. New, interesting, and brave. (SR)
(Heartcore, 1415 E. Samp Lane, Placentia, CA 92870, info@heartcorerecords.net)

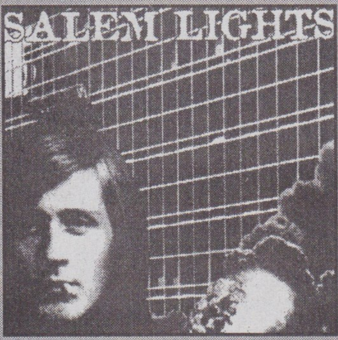
REMEMBERING NEVER - "Suffocates My Words to You" CD

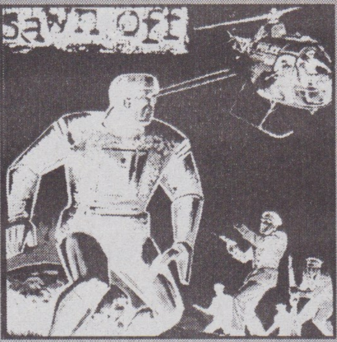
Overproduced metal with growling, then singing; melody, then metal; effects racks and double bass drum, followed by soothing acoustic guitars. 100% formula. "Give me back my broken heart because it's all I have left" in the first song, followed by "I am loved but not wanted" in the second, and "Do you miss me as much as I miss you" in the third? Give me a break. I think that, other than the complete lack of anything resembling real emotion, my biggest complaint with pro-sounding metallic "hardcore" is its alarming resemblance to so much of the garbage that MTV champions as "alternative" or "new metal" or whatever they call it to convince the mindless to buy buy buy. The absence of bad rap is about the only thing that separates this from SYSTEM OF A DOWN. (WN)
(One Day Savior, PO Box 372, Williston Park, NY 11596)

REVILLOS - "Totally Alive" CD

Y'know, this reflective, plasticized hockey puck is just what the doctor (I'm not sure what he's a doctor of, but he always fills my prescriptions without asking questions) ordered. If you're keen on 70s punk rock, novelty science fiction loungewear, or pop musical shenan-







nigans, then you've probably heard of the REVILLOS and might even own a record or two. Their particular brand of cartoony, punchy kitsch-punk is one of this life's simple pleasures, and tracks like "Mystery Action," "(My Baby Does) Good Sculptures," and "Flying Saucer Attack" are among the best and brightest of the 70s punk thing; *Totally Alive* comes from a one-off renuion gig that the band staged in 1996, and they're at the top of their game here: the set list encludes all the hits, played with aplomb and captured in crystal clear fidelity. Unlike most of these sad punk rock reunion gigs, the band actually seemed to be enjoying themselves on stage. Good times, great oldies. (JH)
(Captain Oi, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND, captainoi.co.uk)

RHYTHM COLLISION – "All Bombs Away" CD

These guys are *still* going? I saw them in London with about three other people almost eight years ago. They were great. They did the *Cheers* theme. It was a moment. I remember their first album was compared to SCREECHING WEASEL in these very pages back around then, they're a good band—but no SCREECHING WEASEL, but then who is? This actually sounds as good if not better than anything I've ever heard from them. Their sound has never really changed and they've never rode the mainstreaming and corporatization of punk and alternative culture gravy train like so many other soul-less fuckers, for that alone they deserve a lot of respect. This is really good, if pop-punk's yer bag pick this up and go see them if they play in your town (I'm sure they still do the *Cheers* thing too). I will not sell this to the big record store for a dollar... the highest accolade a *MRR* reviewer can give. Em, sounds a little like SCREECHING WEASEL... (AD)
(Does Everyone Stare?, PO Box 35005, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2R8, CANADA)

RÖSVETT - "Kick Ass!!" LP

Well here we have the first actual LP from these Swedish hardcore heroes whose first EP came out in 1985. This is solid, but somehow lacking—I mean maybe it's just a little too metallic for my taste. Hell, I thought their last EP was pretty solid, but maybe this is just a bit too long. OK, but not spectacular. Personally I'd rather listen to the new SKITSYSTEM. Limited to 400 on vinyl. (MT)
(Six Weeks, 225 Lincoln Ave, Cotati, CA 94931)

THE RUINERS - "Six of the Seven Deadly Sins" CD

Gore hounds listen up... here's some swampy death rock 'n' roll for ya. This is as if if you went into a fun house and had a very bad trip...you know just kinda of weird and disturbing. With songs about vampires, funeral directors and the addictive nature of strippers this is definitely an acquired taste, but this is just one big fat bummer to me.(DL)
(Poverty, no address)

THE RUNAROUNDS - "Easy Action" CD

Arena garage rock from the Carolinas, that packs a punch in the vein of the HELLACOPTERS or NASHVILLE PUSSY. Sportin' Marshall stacks and dual wank-a-thon rock god guitar, the RUNAROUNDS are a good rock package. I just wish there was something here to really set them apart. It's just too easily forgotten, and marketing that whole flame job, iron cross and hot rod thang doesn't really help the cause either. There really oughta be a moratorium on the use of flames on record sleeves. (DL)
(Divebomb, divebombrecords@aol.com)

SAETIA - "A Retrospective" CD

For some reason, despite my obvious liking for music of this genre, I never gave SAETIA a proper listen. At the time, it just seemed like all the people I knew who were "all about" SAETIA were pretentious fashion kids, so I kept my distance. Well, so much for my preconceptions. SAETIA prove to me here that this is almost as good as it gets with respect to innovative, passionate hardcore. I'll call it "screamo" in this forum, but but only to give the reader some sort of bearing. SAETIA seem to combine the best parts of PORTRAITS OF PAST-like song structures and vocal intensity with that certain East Coast sound (seemingly characterized by a quiet/loud groove between the drums and guitar) that is also exhibited by bands like YOU AND I, 12 HOUR TURN, etc. The booklet which comes with this release is laid out in top-notch discography fashion, with a real nice photos and brief accounts on the band's existence written by each band member (reminding me of the last YOU AND I CD). I thoroughly enjoyed listening to this CD and reading the booklet. Definitely one of the releases I will play often from this month's reviews. (SP)
(Level Plane, PO Box 280, New York, NY 10276, www.level-plane.com)

THE SAILORS - "Violent Masturbation Blues" CD

Aye-Aye absolutely lovin' this one from three cocks down under. Here you got Aussie Punk with two guitars, a drum kit, and a sick sense of humor served up raw and wild as you like it. I get the feelin' that fans of the OBLIVIANS and TURBONEGRO will get a big kick out this one. Sail on boys. (DL)
(Dropkick, 38 Advantage Rd. Highett, AUSTRALIA 3190)

SALEM LIGHTS - "Barefoot in the Bathroom/Wolves Fear Sheep"

Wow. This is going to sound weird, but I'm going to follow through with it anyway. I put the A-side of this little puppy on and was immediately reminded of later BEATLES stuff. At first I didn't like it much, but it grew on me quickly. I think it wasn't fast enough to get me initially, but it was good enough that even I couldn't ignore it. Honestly, if John, Paul, George and Ringo had waited for punk rock, this is what it might have sounded like. (KK)
(Funhouse, PO Box 20708, Oakland, CA, 94611)

SAWN OFF/UNKIND - split EP

Last record to be released by the mighty SAWN OFF; it seems due to lineup changes they're changing their name, but no worries, they go out with a bang. Punchy and furious hardcore a la DOOM or HEALTH HAZARD. I'm down. Last we heard from UNKIND 'round these parts was their track on the excellent *Passing Bells* comp from last year, and this follow up is no let down. Haunting mid-paced hardcore more akin to ZERO HOUR or CHRIST ON PARADE than most of what I've heard from Finland. Sorta sounds like the direction NEUROSIS *should* have gone in instead of sounding like PINK FLOYD. (MT)
(Pathetique, PL 843, 13501 Hämeenlinna, FINLAND)

SCARE TACTIC - "P.S. I Love You" EP

Thick, slightly trashed hardcore from four Canadian straight-edge gents who are fed up with lies, a society drowning in sweet, sweet alcohol, and those standing in the way of a woman's right to choose. The only aspect of their tunes that are slightly youth crew are some of the chugging breakdowns, but even lumping those in with the jock crew is a stretch. These songs have much more to do with DEEP WOUND, SIEGE (yeah, yeah, the guitar player is wearing a SIEGE t-shirt, but I swear I'm not being lazy) and DEVOID OF FAITH. (TH)
(Solomon Method, 516 Park Cress, Pickering, ON, LIW 2C9 CANADA)

SCOREFOR - "Leaving the Birdcage" CD

It is rare that I am able to sit through a new pop punk band these days and this happens to be one of those rare times. SCOREFOR really doesn't do anything special or amazing but they play mid-tempo pop punk that is well written and catchy enough to be entertaining. Musically and vocally the songs are similar to early ZOINKS stuff (which translates into a mix of GREEN DAY, SCREECHING WEASEL, BAD RELIGION and SICKO). If you liked what Doctor Strange Records was putting out about five years ago then this is highly recommended. (PA)
(Wolverine, Kaiserwerther Str. 166, 40474 Dusseldorf, GERMANY, www.wolverine-records.de)

SELFISH - "Burning Sensation" CD

Awesome. I was psyched when I saw this—this Finnish hardcore band has a songwriting talent which puts them on par with any of the infamous Finnish hardcore legends. This is a ten-song foray in to speed, metal guitar flourishes (without being overtly wank metal) and frenzied delivery. Recorded at Our House Studios in Japan, which may explain some of the Japanese hardcore sound. The lyrics are somewhat vague and difficult to understand, but they are in English, and have an anthemic quality which had me singing along, even if I didn't know what I was singing! Furious stuff, this everything I hoped it would be! (TM)
(HG Fact, 105 Nakano Shinbashi M, 2-7-15 Yayoi-Cho, Nakano, TOKYO)

SEVEN FEET FOUR - "Voluntary Victim..." EP

A Swedish version of SONG OF ZARATHUSTRA. These kids play chaotic San Diego hardcore influenced by the likes of ANTIOCH ARROW and the VSS. It's a good mix of abrasive, dramatic, and straightforward rockin' parts... I don't hear much of this style of hardcore coming out of Europe, and got excited when I read where these guys were from. Listening to them, SEVEN FEET FOUR aren't much different than American bands that play this kind of stuff. I feel like I might not have been as interested in them if they weren't from Sweden, but they held my attention. (VH)
(www.7feet4.com)

SEWING WITH NANCIE - "Take a Look at Yourself" CD

Second release from these Canadian yahoos. Sounding like BLINK 182 covering NERF HERDER (or is it the other way around) they manage to sound exactly like their first album (wait isn't this their first album? I swear these are the same songs I reviewed about a year ago with different cover art. This must be a rerecording of that same album... or at least I hope it is [because after all what would be the point of releasing the same album twice?]). Well all I gotta say now is Fast Music still sucks and though this album isn't as horrible as their usual crap they still wont get a decent review from me, so take that you filthy bastards! (BM)
(Fast Music, PO Box 206512, New Haven, CT 06520, www.fastmusic.com)

LES SEXAREENOS - "We Gonna Ball" EP

Tabernac! Sounds and looks like LES SEXAREENOS are regressing back to some king of club-thumping caveman state...this one's rough and ready, free from gloss and rude as all get-out. The B-side includes a cover of KENNY & THE KASUALS '60s garage chestnut "Journey to Tyme", but the big thrill here's the title track which deftly updates "Louie Louie" for all interested listeners. Fun. (JH)

(Corduroy, 38 Advantage Rd., Highett 3190 Australia, www.corduroy.com.au)

SIN DIOS/CEMENTERIO SHOW - split EP

SIN DIOS have two tracks of their angry high-speed sounds with intelligent lyrics in Spanish. CEMENTERIO SHOW screech violently heretical lyrics about the Catholic church. I'm not in favor of organized religion, but the lyrics on "Highest Power," about rape and murder, are fucking too much for my tastes. (SR)

(Difusion Libertaria, Apdo. 18.251, 28080 Madrid-c/Santa Barbara, 9, SPAIN, www.sindois.net)

SIN DIOS/APATIA NO - split EP

Really great split. SIN DIOS's guitar is fucking compelling—tight, fast, and driving. "Satanismo, hermano del fascismo" justly criticizes Satanists for contributing to the Christian agenda. Their other song deals with accidents in the workplace as a jumping off place for condemning capitalism. APATIA NO, from Venezuela, keeps up the pace and the fury with two more fast-paced, angry, political songs. Music to run around in circles to, pissed, fist in the air. (AC)

(Noseke, A.P. 64670, Z.P. 1064-A, Caracas, VENEZUELA, apatia_no@hotmail.com)

SKITSYSTEM - "Enkel Resa Till Rännstenen" LP

Abso-fucking-lutely crushing! D-tuned, bleeding throat, new asshole ripping Swedish hardcore not far removed from the tree of ANTI-CIMEX or TOTALITÄR or to some extent, what TRAGEDY *wishes* they sounded like. Perfect. (MT)

(Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS - "Beware of..." LP

SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS were so fucking influential! The 1978 LP *Do It Dog Style* changed the lives of kids all over the world- punks, skins, and glam rockers. SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS had a triumphant reunion tour in Europe in 2000 and in the USA in 2001. Many people felt that SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS stole the show at the Holidays In The Sun in San Francisco. During that show, the band played the new song, "Saturday Night 'til Sunday Morning," and the crowd was able to overlook the tune because it was surrounded by hits from the seventies. Unfortunately, this record does not fare as well. Mick Rossi's guitar work is still inspired, but the songwriting is not up to the SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS standards. After repeated listenings, there can be only one conclusion—this record stinks! There's only one good song on the whole fucking record! This is another band that should stick to the old material! To make matters even worse, SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS cover a BEATLES' song. Fuck the BEATLES! Perhaps we will get a new live recording of the old classics on a future LP. In the meantime—avoid this new studio record! (BR)

(TKO Records, 4104 24th St. #103, San Francisco, CA 94114)

SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS - "Saturday Night 'til Sunday Morning/Quick Joey Small"

Hey, I dig the first LP too, but this pretty much sounds like CHARLIE SEXTON without the dashing good looks. Rock and roll vocals and everything else. The flip is a first LP track live which would be better without the forced audience participation. I'm holding off on the "reunions suck" rant, but this could be better. (RL)

(TKO Records, 24th St. #103, San Francisco, CA 94114)

SLEEPERS - "Seventh World" EP

The SLEEPERS were a Bay Area band who put out I think one EP in the late '70s, and this here's a bootleg of it. Sometimes a little garagey, sometimes sounding like the EJECTORS, sometimes just a bit too lo-tempo for me. (DP)

(Win, no address)

SLUGGO - "Contradiction" EP

As I listened to this, my initial reaction was 'this sounds like it could have been on *Flex Your Head.*' I was wondering how they'd got that period sound down so closely. Then I look at the sleeve, and it was actually recorded in 1983. So there you have it— eight songs of *Flex Your Head*-style hardcore from a now-defunct Ohio band. It's not clear if this was ever actually released, so you might ask, why now? Still, it's a pretty good record and if it had been recorded last month I'd have told you to go out and buy it, so I suppose the same recommendation applies. (AM)

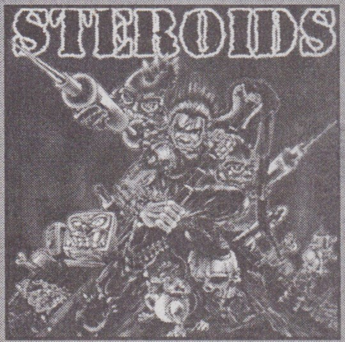
(Agitate 96, c/o Richard Ramos, 11479 Amboy Ave, San Fernando, CA 91340 xag96x@hotmail.com)

THE SOUND OF FAILURE - "Distress Signal" EP

THE SOUND OF FAILURE plays music that has a lot of different '90s influence. There is a lot of metal in their sound, but a lot of emo as well (which is luckily not whiny). I can hear JAWBREAKER, but also something like FROM ASHES RISE. The records starts off with an *Office Space* sound clip which is fucking great. The lyrics are kind of clever and kind of funny. This is a nice release. (WR)
(When Humans Attack!, 356 Birdsong Way, Doylestown, PA 18901)

SPLODGENESSABOUNDS - CD

A UK band that was pretty much unknown over here back in the day. Starring punk vet MAX SPLODGE, we apparently have the early releases here. Being an avid record shopper, I must say I have never seen any of these releases before. Singles and an LP of tongue-in-cheek punk and weird tangents here. Fans of TOY DOLLS would probably be into this. I liked the reissues/releases after these releases. I was just surprised to see so many releases had come before them. A weird fun part of UK punk history. (RL)
(Captain Oi, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND, www.captainoi.com)



STEROIDS – "Sous Produit" CD

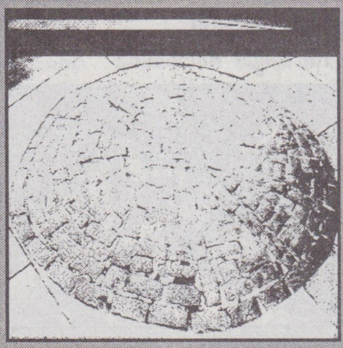
From the cover I expected third-rate street-punk, but this is hard and fast, and that's always good. From France, these cats could easily fit in on Charged Records alongside the CASUALTIES etc. Terrible artwork, though, I *hate* Clockwork Orange! (AD)
(Steroids, 13 Rue de Vignier, 25000 Besancon, FRANCE)

STRIKE ANYWHERE – "Underground Europe 2001" EP

"Strike Anywhere" could sum up American foreign policy right about now. More top-notch melodic hardcore from these Virginians. This is actually four songs from a 1999 demo released on a cool EP to benefit victims of the Genoa WTO protests where Italian police forgot their true purpose and job descriptions and terrorized international demonstrators who were in Genoa to fight the unfair treatment of the second and third worlds at the hands of an increasingly greedy and ruthless global corporate community. Pigs—can't live with 'em, can't kill 'em, whaddya do?. Anyway where was I? Oh yeah, great tuneful political hardcore not unlike AVAIL, KID DYNAMITE, or even REASON TO BELIEVE. Great lyrics, great packaging, great music, great cause. (AD)
(Scene Police, c/o DPM, Humboldtstrasse 15, 53115 Bonn, GERMANY)

SUSPECT DEVICE – "Boston Massacre" CD

Okay, I'm a sucker for the whole Massachusetts punk thing. Ya' know, Irishesque (fuck me, I just wrote *Irishesque*) street-punk with heaps of harmony and cheese. Up there with THE VIGILANTES, TOMMY & THE TERRORS, PINKERTON THUGS, and of course DROPKICK MURPHYS. Scally-capped Guinness soaked fun. Tom Brady, who would of thought. (AD)
(Pigpile Music, 43 Riverside Ave, #502 Medford, MA 02155)

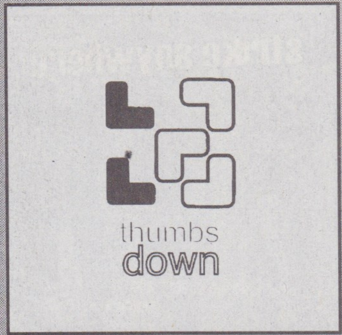


TAPEWORM - "Break My Face" EP

Another entry in the "questionable public service" category, this is a repress of one of the most legendary and expensive *KBD* punk singles of all time. Nobody seemed to know anything about the band or record for years, which sent collectors mortgaging their houses and scampering for the few known copies. Now everybody can have one and for cheap too! Thanks to the detective work of some righteous punk collectors, we've learned that TAPEWORM was "Stamford's own punk rock band" and that the four members were high school students in the Connecticut town in 1978, when their only record was released. The four-song single starts off with the unlikely free jazz "Intro," which is funny and wouldn't sound out of place on a SUN RA or SUN CITY GIRLS record. But "Blues For an Insurance Salesman," "I Wanna Die," and the incredible "Break My Face" are all killer three-chord punk rock anthems with snotty vocals, anti-everything lyrics, fuzzed-out garage production and ultra-retarded guitar solos. In short, everything you could ever want in a punk record. (JG)
(Kablooey, no address)

TEACHER'S PET - "Jenny Super Teen" EP

These adult-wanna-be-teens are up there with the BOBBYTEENS in image and '70s flair, but TEACHER'S PET remind me more of the BAY CITY ROLLERS. "Jenny" starts out like "Saturday Night" with a floor tom beat and hand claps. Heck, all the tunes have keyboards, sickly sweet vocals and 70s cutting edge pop sensibilities. More '70s than *That '70s Show*. (HM)
(Flapping Jet, 3639 Midway Dr. #271, San Diego, CA 92110, www.flappingjet.com)



TETSUO ARREY - "II" LP
Holy shit, where the fuck do these Japanese bands come from? Is there a factory in Tokyo that turns out dodgy-looking geezers with long hair and moustaches who play ripping hardcore? This is killer metallic hardcore with the attack of DEATHSIDE and the burly power of BASTARD. Some of the slower songs drag but when they turn up the heat they peel paint. Tasty full color gatefold cover with photos of said moustachioed gents to boot. (TB)
(H.G Fact, 401 Hongo-M, 2-36-2 Yayoi-Cho, Nakano, Tokyo, 164-0013, JAPAN)

THUMBS DOWN - "One Love" EP
Belgium youth crew that on the whole is pretty normal. Fast parts, mosh parts, accusatory lyrics, screaming lead vocals and chanting group backing vocals. The recording has some energy and the songs are played well but there is nothing that sets it apart. (PA)
(Firestorm, Italielei 58/9, 2018 Antwerpen, BELGIUM, jan@firestormrecords.com)

TIM MCVEIGH'S ARMY - "Don't You Fucking Get it Yet?" LP
TIM MCVEIGH'S ARMY have something to say about a lot of stuff I think is important. Unfortunately the music on this record is so terrible, I don't think their ideas are coming across. Songs about evil capitalism, racism, and politics are drowned out by badly played, badly mixed, out-of-tune instruments that almost sounds like someone's spoken word with a garage jam recorded over it. (DP)
(Ammonium Nitrate, 112 Steven Dr, Security, CO 80911)

TOTALLY RIDICULOUS/SUTEK CONSPIRACY/CATHETER - split CD
Emo packaging on a completely brutal CD, one well worth seeking out. TOTALLY RIDICULOUS starts out with six tracks of bass/drum grind with awesome lyrics about everything from stupid dancers ("Mosh King") to homophobia ("Habitual Hatred" has the best lyrics I've read in some time). Distorted as all hell, and raw to the core. I've heard SUTEK CONSPIRACY by name only for some time, but this is my first listen, and I feel like a chump for having waited so damn long. They are the answer to all the fake emo-metal core bands that I'm so fucking sick of (see my reviews of IN DYING DAYS and REMEMBERING NEVER in this issue). They have all the metal parts, some of the guitar leads, none of the "heartfelt" sung vocals, lyrics that aren't all about ex-girlfriends, but most of all goddamnit they're fucking PUNK. Five songs, and they all rule! Closing the disc are the CATHETER, the Kings of Metal. I swear they never let up, last month's record (and live set) were amazing, and now they destroy me five more times (and the S.O.B. cover...holy shit!). When they are slow, there is none more powerful, and when they are fast, fucking look out! It's like D-Beat, blast beat, doom (and DOOM), and KREATOR. I am still floored that CATHETER are not the most popular crusty-hardcoremetal band in the world, whether you have spikes and studs or work pants and dreadlocks, fucking do yourself a favor. (There are two addresses on the CD, so maybe try email before ordering, and you WILL be ordering.) (WN)
(Life=Shit, RR13 Box 415, Bloomington, IL 61704, alqpublic@hotmail.com)

TOXIC BONKERS - "Blindness" CD
Full-bore grinding ASSÜCK meets NAPALM DEATH brutality from Poland. not really my cup of tea—but very well done for the genre. You closet heshers will eat this shit up, cause it's brutal as fuck bro'! Total grind depravity. (MT)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie, PO Box 53, 34-400 Nowy Targ, POLAND)

TOYS THAT KILL/RAGIN' HORMONES - split EP
TOYS THAT KILL don't seem like such the HICKEY ripoff band on this split. Oh the HICKEY influence is still there, it is just that TOYS THAT KILL sound a little bit more poppy and accessible. RAGIN' HORMONES have a rough QUEERS influence to their sound and I am guessing some pretty dumb lyrics. The RAGIN' HORMONES don't have a lyric sheet, but with song titles like a "The Titty Twist" and "My Girl Swallows" that may well be a good thing. (JF)
(Stardumb, PO Box 21145, 3001 AC Rotterdam, NETHERLANDS)

UNCONFORM - "Moucku Cyacmba" CD
Should you buy this CD, just skip the first song. It's an awful, melodramatic snoozer. The remaining songs have a hint of introspection and the dramatic, but nothing nearly so navel gazing. Hardcore-rooted tunes with a brisk tempo and the rough Russian tongue. This band seems to have condensed the middle and later years of ENDPOINT into one CD, but with more crunch and direction. And no weird singer ramblings. (TH)
(Unconform, PO Box 64, 109147, Moscow, RUSSIA,,unconform@mail.ru)

VIBRATIONS - "Love, Resistance..." CD
Classic sounding Japanese hardcore along the same lines as FORWARD or PAINTBOX. This is the kind of stuff that makes you wish you were galloping though the streets on a glistening steed, ambushing the armies of posers at the pop punk show. Thick guitars and rolled

R's, with solid drums pushing the whole thing along at a steady rocking pace, not too fast to shake your fist in the air, perfect for moshing. I am such a sucker for this shit. (WN)
(Shot & Shout/Bronze Fist, bronze-f@f3.dion.ne.jp)

VIBRATORS - "Punk Rock Rarities" CD

A release of demos and outtake/unreleased recordings. Certainly some great alternate versions of some of their early classic stuff. With 18 of 20 tracks from 1979 or earlier, you get the VIBRATORS in their heyday. Possibly for more than just completists. (RL)
(Captain Oi, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND, www.captainoi.com)

VODKA JUNIORS - "Drunk and Loud" CD

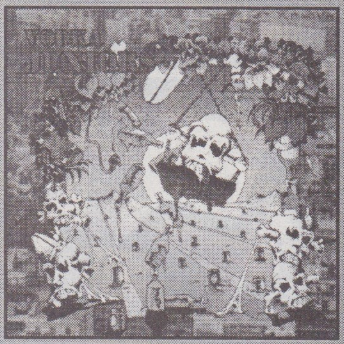
By the way this reads, this band are drunken high school students from GREECE. They certainly take a stand on several issues - like consumption of beer (and it's importance!), cool kids (and how they suck), and a beach lifestyle. Gotta wonder who pays for all that! All lyrical sniping aside, the music is quick melodic hardcore. Nothing terribly original or ground breaking, but delivered with some amount of energy, and they keep the songs short and sweet. I wouldn't search something like this out, but I'd guess that they wouldn't clear the room at a live show. (TM)
(Cannonball 666, PO Box 52817, Athens, GREECE)

WALLRIDE - "O Melhor da Wallride" CD

Good punk rock from Brazil! Aggressive loud female vocals accompanied by tons of guitar and pounding drums. They cover COCK SPARRER's "I Got Your Number." I want to hear one in Portuguese next time! (SR)
(Rotten, Caixa Postal 781, CEP 09380-970, Maua, SP, BRASIL, rotten@rottenrecords.com.br)

WARRIOR KIDS - "Official Discography" CD

According to their press release paper, this band formed in '78 in Marseilles, France using the name FOREFINGER, and in '82 they changed their name to the WARRIOR KIDS. The rest of the press release is boring and lies about how great they were. This CD (17 songs in all) is pretty straight forward street punk rock more or less trying to mimic early SKREWDRIVER. At times they get a lil' poppier, and they even throw in a few ska tracks to excite those who are into that sort of thing. Middle of the road type stuff. (NF)
(Disagree, BP 21 - 13243 Marseille, cedex 1 - FRANCE)



WEASELS - "Beat Her With a Rake/I'm The Commander"

Another "unofficial" release of a borderline infamous, or at least semi-desirable record by collector types. These days, these guys seem like one-note, joke punksters with cheeky "asides" (is that a SABBATH riff on the song? What's with the wank-guitar solo?). Though to confess, I much like the flip side rather than "Beat Her" as this song comes closer to *KBD* type irreverent stoopid punk with a nasty attitude (but then theres that guitar solo again). But nothing that I would consider classic. Save your bucks for the TAPEWORM single. (JY)
(no address)

WILDEBEESTS - "1996" EP

Self described "Brit-Bog Beat Ruffians", the WILDEBEESTS hit with an immediately familiar sound. Taking cues from any number of famous or forgotten roots rock/punk bands including such obvious compatriots as the HEADCOATS and band members previous work in the KAISERS or MILKSHAKES. Energetic delivery, unpolished but effective recording, a couple of originals (including one instrumental) and a rousing CHUCK BERRY cover combine for a solid, catchy and memorable release. (TM)
(SmartGuy's Dustbin, 3288 21st Street, PMB #32, San Francisco, CA 94110, www.smartguyrecords.com)

WLOCHATY - "Zamiana Pieniedzy Na Rebelie" CD

Here we have one of my favorite Polish punk bands—sorta CRASS meets CONFLICT influence shining through, with that amazing sorta bouncy melodic element that I just eat up that just seems to inflict itself on so many Czech and Polish bands. This is a reissue of their first LP and a live EP plus two new tracks. Fucking great stuff. Anarchist Black Cross benefit for those keeping score. (MT)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie, PO Box 53, 34-400 Nowy Targ, POLAND)

WLOCHATY - "Zmowa" CD

Newest studio output by these Polish punk veterans. Driving, melodic, and totally impassioned punk rock. From haunting intros to raging CONFLICT style punk, I'm so down for this style and I wish you saw more of its influence on bands in the US—or at least that bands like this, POST REGIMENT, INNOXIA CORPORRA, or APATIA would come over and tour. (MT)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie, PO Box 53, 34-400 Nowy Targ, POLAND)

WOPTIME - "Il Giorno Del Guidizio" CD

Don't be scared away by the bad tough guy drawings on the cover, as I was, and please ignore the basketball jerseys in the photo collage. Not at all the tough guy crap I was expecting, WOPTIME does an excellent job of mixing old Italian hardcore with newer NYHC...they give thanks to both RAW POWER and SICK OF IT ALL, and if you combine the old stuff from those two bands, then you've got a pretty good idea where WOPTIME is coming from. Admittedly, there is a bit too much tough guy here for my taste, but overall it's damned good. Bonus points for the ROUGH cover. All hail '80s Italian hardcore (and the new shit ain't too bad either)! (WN)

(Riot, Viale Monza, 26, 20127 Milano, ITALY, woptime@hotmail.com)

WORLD CHAOS - "Drink Positive...or Don't!" LP

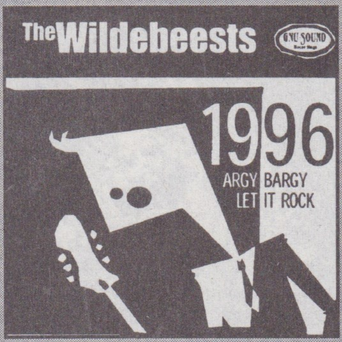
Hmmm...the first thing I noticed is that on the record label, it reads "ANARCHY PEACE CHAOS". I can see Anarchy and Peace fitting together, or Anarchy and Chaos fitting together, but I don't quite understand how Anarchy, Peace, and Chaos could exist at the same time. I don't understand how you can change the system while inebriated. And I don't understand how peace involves wanting to "Blow their fucking heads away." But that's all to be debated. The lyrics are what you would expect: fueled by oppression, fueled by hate, mad at the world around them. I can understand that. The music is pretty rad. It is DISCHARGE style at times, sometimes a lot faster and grittier. (WR)

(Jan-Peter Franz, Schliemannstr. 39, 10437 Berlin GERMANY worldchaos@bttb.de)

X - "Live At the Civic '79" CD

Recently unearthed live recording of this now-revered Aussie band from '79. Pretty damn pristine recording of a pretty good night. Consisting of the 4-piece post *X-Aspirations* line-up, this is pretty cool old school "classic" Oz punk that reminds one at time of guys like the NEW YORK DOLLS or even the DEAD BOYS but with their own unique take on the form. There's an almost rough-hewn '50s sensibilities put through a thuggish/stripped-down-to-the-basest-elements sensibility which renders the whole thing pretty cool. Almost like the '50s as done by the Cleveland bands like the PAGANS, but the Australians' take on it seems more primal sometimes. X doesn't "rock" as much as they get under your skin and sits somewhere on the fence between joy and insanity. Probably the most cool take on the '50s tune "Dream Baby" ever heard. Most of the tunes are not fast, somewhat mid-tempo "bouncy" with sloppy-ass, brain-piercing guitars and a big-fat, monolithic rhythm section and the crazed vocals of Steve Lucas. Glad to be hearing this and glad you will be too. (JY)

(DropKick, 38 Advantage Rd., Higett, Vic 3190 AUSTRALIA)



YACOPSAE – "Einstweilige Vernichtung" CD

OK, let me break this down for you. Out of 37 songs on this CD the longest one is 56 seconds long. This is full-on ear melting grind and thrash that gives HELLNATION a run for their money. Pummeling drums, shredding guitar work, bruising vocals, damn it is the perfect combo for an all out assault on the eardrums. These guys put out their first vinyl release back in 1994 and if you have not heard them by now, then this would be an excellent place to start. (RC)

(Slap A Ham, PO Box 7337, Alhambra, CA 91802-7337)

THE YOBS - "The Worst of the Yobs" CD

This one arrived at *MRR* a couple months too late, but that's alright with me. The BOYS are one of my favorite British punk-pop bands and the YOBS were their alter-ego, which recorded a handful of nasty pisstakes of traditional x-mas tunes in 1980. This best-of compilation is mostly re-recordings due to record label entanglements but it still sounds great, especially when they tackle a rocker like CHUCK BERRY's "Run Rudolph Run." A little fluffy for everyday listening, but a sure hit for the holidays. Too bad they didn't do the BEACH BOYS' "Little Saint Nick" or BOB SEGER & THE LAST HEARD's "Sock It To Me Santa," surely two of the greatest xmas songs ever! (JG)

(Captain Oi!, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 8QA, ENGLAND)

THE YOBS - "Christmas Album" LP

Rubbish! Pile of shit! I don't see the humor, nor do I see how anyone could put such time and energy into putting out such a release. Especially the BOYS (YOBS is their "alter-egos", with the "y" and the "b" of their name [obviously] switched). The traditional Christmas songs: "Jingle Bells", "White Christmas", "Twelve Days Of Christmas", etc. will have you either scratching your head, or looking for a shotgun to blow this morphed-clay pigeon to fuck. Oh, and there's is a couple original Christmas numbers by the BOYS. Whoopty-friggin-do! (NF)

(Get Back, no address)

YOUTH RIOT - "Burn Glendora to the Ground" EP

Eight tracks of rough-as-fuck hardcore, sounding like a rudimentary YOUTH BRIGADE (DC) or even early BLACK FLAG. Plenty of fuck-you-up/settle-the-score type lyrics all bundled

into a handsome hand-screened cover and purple vinyl. My only complaint is that its waaaay sloppy in parts and I'm thinking that maybe they shouldda put this out as a demo rather than rushing to vinyl. I'll definitely be keeping my eyes peeled for these boys in the future.(TB)
(Captain Wiley, PO Box 95, Los Alamitos, CA 90720)

V/A - "5 Anni Sulla Strada" CD
From what I can tell all of the bands on this compilation are from Italy. This is a double CD that contains a total of 30 bands. The music covered is a broad spectrum of styles including punk, grind, emo, indie rock, pop punk, hardcore and oi. I didn't recognize many bands on here, but a few that really stood out were DE CREW, LAFALCE, MACH 5, RIFIUTI, THIS SIDE UP and WOPTIME. While I didn't find this horrible by any stretch of the imagination, I did find that most of the bands didn't really fall under my preferred taste in punk rock. (RC)
(Riot, Viale Monza, 26-20127 Milano, ITALY riotrecords.com)

V/A - "Before Birdmen Flew...Vol. 1" LP
This record is an example of something that both my dad, and Jeff "Cartwheel" Glave would love. Old beat music, R&B, and garage from Australia circa '65- '67. Sixteen songs by sixteen groups you've (probably) never heard of. Most of which do it competently enough, and I think that this *Birdman* series of records will please the masses who dig this groovy stuff. (NF)
(Vinyl Vengeance, no address)

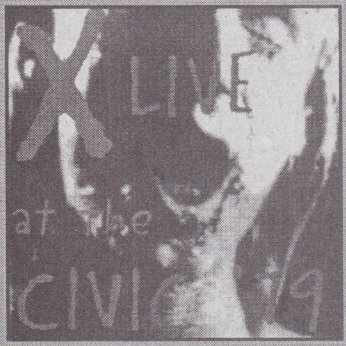
V/A - "Before Birdmen Flew...Vol. 2" LP
A bunch of obscure demos and 45s from Australia circa '65-67 (before RADIO BIRDMAN changed Aussie rock and roll I guess). 16 killer beat, fuzz, and psych numbers that will make you dance and sing along. Most reviewers call this stuff cliche and mediocre but this is like finding a long lost tape of local garage bands; for it's time it was raw and these bands thought they were doing something exciting. (BM)
(Vinyl Vengeance, no address)

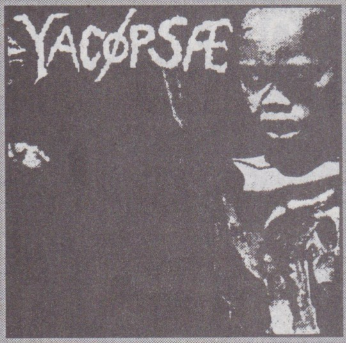
V/A - "Before Birdmen Flew...Vol. 3" LP
Well, the title says it all. This volume in the series has a majority of slow ballads (though the first track from OTHERS is not and definitely makes it worth having) and the only version of "Louie, Louie" (so far). Other tracks from COURTMEN, CLEFS, ATLANTICS, JET SET, TONY WORSLEY, the FIVE, SUNSETS, JEFF ST. JOHN & THE ID, JIMMY CROCKETT & THE SHANES, CHEROKEES, HUBB KAPP & THE WHEELS, PINK FINKS, STEVE & THE BOARD and FOUR FOURS. Sound quality is pretty good. I would suspect the people behind the *Back From The Grave* series are behind this one too. (CK)
(Vinyl Vengeance, no address)

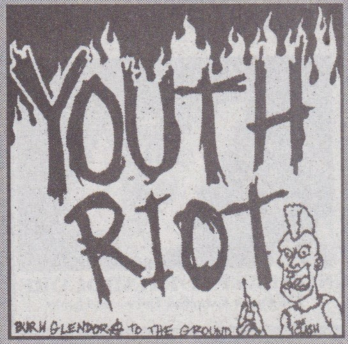
V/A - "Before Birdmen Flew…Vol. 4" LP
.......Australian Beat, R&B & Punk: 1965-1967.....that's what it says on the cover......and from the first cut this bitch is juicy....fans of Aussie, like myself, will indeed enjoy this slab of cock wax...fotos and little bios on the bands on the back cover....coolness....sound quality is pretty good too.....looks like there's at least three other volumes of this mojo, good for your collection and your sex life...makes your pussy feel good......mmmmmm, Aussie pussy....all over me...... (SW)
(Vinyl Vengeance, no address)

V/A - "Ego! Ego! Ego! The Decade We Can't Recall" LP
My only LP for review this month, but it's the only one I need! The mighty ONYAS celebrate(d) their 10th Birthday with the help of 20 other bands/friends who've kicked down a tune in their honor. Standouts? Fuck it, what's not to like? You've got LOS ASS-DRAGGERS, BIG BONGIN' BABY, STUNT CAR DRIVERS, NEW BOMB TURKS (best cover of "Good On Ya Baby" by the Aussie X ever!), The HYMIES, COSMIC PSHYCHOS, CRUSADERS, The SAILORS, LOS PERROS, and way more...Way to go ONYAS! (RY)
(Dropkick, 38 Advantage Road Highett Vic 3190, AUSTRALIA www.dropkick.com.au)

V/A - "Go Down Fighting, Come Up Smiling" CD
Fuck, this is such a great CD comp, and it's a rare moment in my life when I will utter that sort of sentiment. If for nothing else, the cash raised for this goes towards the opening of The Big Idea—which is a collectively run bookshop/infoshop in Pittsburgh. The bonus is that this serves as a good documentation of the current Iron City punk scene and the variety that encompasses it. Hell, if for nothing else, it's worth it for THE BEHIND ENEMY LINES (new AUS-ROTTEN/REACT band), CRUCIAL UNIT ("…PDA! PDA! We don't need your PDA!") McCARTHY COMMISION, WORLD B (fucking amazing femaled vox'd punk), and BEHIND ENEMY LINES (the other new AUS-ROTTEN band). Hell there's even plenty of geeky pop punk, garage, emo, and indie rock bands for you saps that get tired of non-stop hard-







core punk attack. Awesome and highly reccomended. (MT)
($6 ppd: Hard Travelin, c/o Mike Q. Roth, PO Box 8131, Pittsburgh, PA 15217)

V/A - "NYHC: The Way It Was" LP

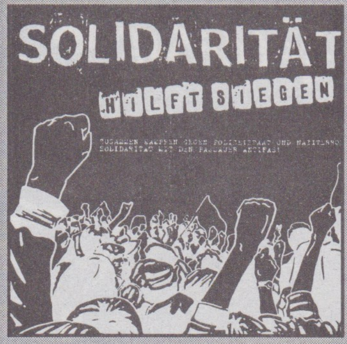
A reissue of a bootleg of four classic early-'80s NYHC 7"s. The original pressing featured CAUSE FOR ALARM which has been replaced by URBAN WASTE, which is fucking great because I'd say the URBAN WASTE record is *the* best NYHC record from that period. Alongside with the MOB, ANTIDOTE (an earlier YOUTH OF TODAY that will blow your mind away), and the ABUSED, no fan of hardcore will be able to wipe the drool off of their face! This is all intense, raging, and innovative shit that's not easy to find without painfully typing "ebay.com" onto a computer. I'm sure the kid who released this sucker will be taking his baths in a tub of gold a la Scrooge McDuck He should have had the decency to take the fucking time and energy to include some sort of insert... but fuck it, buy this record! (VH)
(no address)

V/A - "Rocked and Loaded" CD

A mostly very boring greasercore and psychobilly comp. With talents like: HELLVIS, the HEPTANES, DRAGSTRIP DEMONS, EIGHT BALL GRIFTER, LORDS OF THE HIGHWAY, shit like that. (RY)
(Rock 'n' Roll Purgatory, www.rocknrollpurgatory.com)

V/A - "Rock 'n' Roll Hell Yeah" CD

Billed as a punk, ska and swing comp, these Germans have been practicing and writing decent tunes. No garage or crust styles here. Most of these bands go for the clean high end production. Lots of good tunes from bands like: SUBZERO, HUMAN HAMSTER HYBRIDS, HAMMERCOCKS, HIPSTER DADDY-O, DINO MARTINIS, PEACE BROTHERS. Check it out! (HM)
(Wolverine, Kaiserswerther Str. 166, 40474 Düsseldorf GERMANY, www.wolverine-records.de)



V/A - "Solidaritat Hilft Siegen" EP

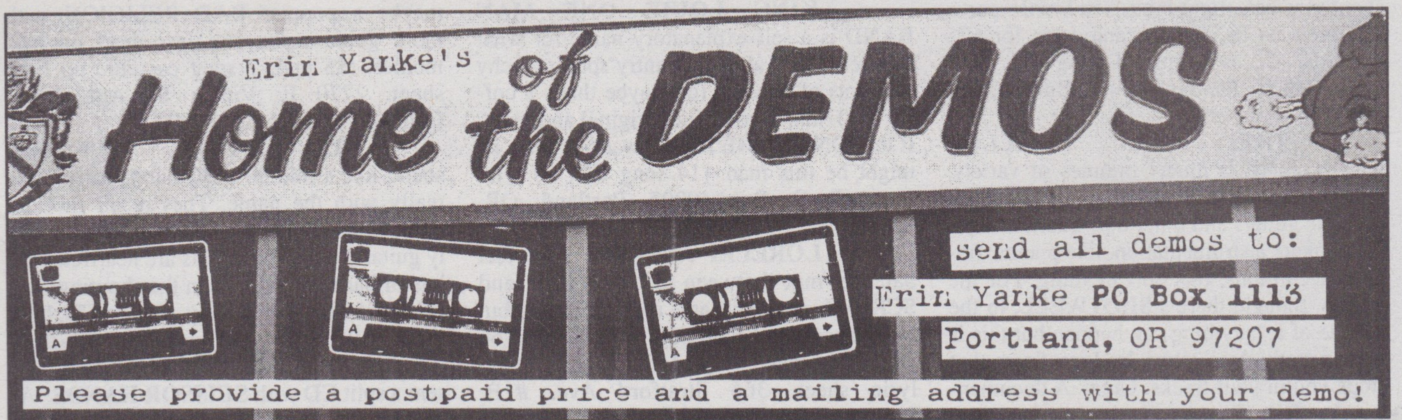
The bands on this compilation represent an interesting mix of styles here. You get a bit of hardcore, thrash, punk (melodic and old school), grind and metal all mixed together. The band line-up consists of the ANNOYED, RPG 7 (my favorite band on this EP), STRASSENTERROT, AMEN 81, ERRORSURFER and BAFFDECKS.Not much on here is in English so I am a lacking a bit on any further information. I can tell you that AMEN 81 does a decent cover of "I Spy" by NO FOR AN ANSWER. Can't say I have ever heard that particular song covered before. (RC)
(Giftzwerg, c/o Flo & Gernot, Bauerngasse89, 97421 Schweinfurt)

V/A - "Suburban Voice Presents: No Sleep for Hardcore" CD

A new issue of*Suburban Voice* has now come to mean another fantastic CD comp with a mix of well-known bands and those that might, if the right people sneeze in their direction, be the band people are kicking themselves for missing live four years later. Al Quint, the four-eyed punk at the helm of *Suburban Voice,* has included songs from SELF DEFENSE, BALANCE OF TERROR, LIMP WRIST, TEAR IT UP, PAC-MEN, F-MINUS (who I agree is underrated), WORD SALAD, DILLINGER FOUR, and long time Texas punks the HATES. In the past, many of the bands on these comps are interviewed in the accompanying *Suburban Voice.* Flip ahead to the 'zine ghetto and see if that is the case this time around. (TH)
(Suburban Voice, PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 01903, alellen@shore.net)

V/A - "Thinking of Alice" CD

This is an ALICE COOPER tribute. No, really, it is. Sixteen bands doing sixteen classic ALICE tunes. DEAD KINGS, ANTISEEN, NERDS, FLESH TUXEDO, FLAMIN' ANUS, ELVIS X, LIMECELL, HELLSTOMPER, RANCID VAT, REJECTORS, CRETIN 66, many others. All the bands sound pretty much alike. "I'm Eighteen" is in annoying spoken word, and I never thought ALICE COOPER did enough songs worth covering to begin with. Only for diehard ALICE fans, but what would they be doing reading M*RR?* (DP)
(Scatboy, boc1974@aol.com)



Although you might think this is epic, I still have 2 boxes of demos in the corner of my room waiting for review. Have patience, punkers, and we will get to them all. "We" means Doug and Jacqueline are now going to help me out, mostly because they don't want me to die in a demo avalanche and also, for the kids. I am eternally grateful, and you should be, too. Cheers to them and away we go.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION JACKSON play great raucous thrashy hardcore with upfront mostly shouting vocals that in no way have emotional rambling or political pontificating going on...but I guess the fact they have a sense of humor is apparent in their name. Doug and Jacqueline say "Refreshing!"($2 ppd. 10 song CD, no lyric sheet. 2163 Chestnut Ave., Ardmore, PA 19003-3003.)

@PATIA NO and **DONAMALAD** put out a split tape, recorded live at the third anarchist gathering. @PATIA NO sound like a catchier version of AUS ROTTEN playing live. DONAMALAD have a tight grip on rockaroll the same way TURBONEGRO did, but they add politics (10 songs on the @PATIA NO side, and 9 songs on the DONAMALAD side, no lyric sheet. C. C. 329, CP 1744, Moreno Bs. As. Argentina.)

Dear **ATTOXXXICA**: Your tape broke in transit and it won't play on our machines. Please send another. Thanks.

BILLY DIRT CULT must have formed in one of those Alaska winters, cause this is fucking dark, slow and hypnotic paced music that builds and explodes and the vocals are so fucking anguished...damn. A less sonic and less complex MELVINS, or maybe a more distorted WAIFFLE. "This is the perfect sound to the murder/suicide you've been contemplating" or maybe the real sound of rural anguish. ($5 CD, $3 cassette world wide. 6 song CD, no lyric sheet. 926 W 26th Apt 205, Anchorage, AK 99503.)

COUNTY Z has amazing vocals, upbeat tempos mostly, even the slow songs have a tempo that makes dancing mandatory. There is violin on most songs and sometimes a trumpet makes an appearance. They have the energy of THE DOG FACED HERMANS but it's simpler somehow, maybe cause there's not a guitar so it's easier for the other elements to be upfront without competition. (10 song cassette, lyric sheet. P. O. Box 582514, Minneapolis, MN 55458.)

COUSIN AL AND THE NEW GENERATION are a slow surf band with super up front vocals that have the littlest bit of reverb on them, singing about the standard themes of bikinis, dancing, cars and of course surfing. They cover Dead Man's Curve and Monster Mash. (15 song CD, no lyric sheet. P. O. Box 88003, Rochester, NY 14618.)

Here's a three way between **COW TIPPED, POINDEXTER**, and **SKAPEGOAT.** COW TIPPED has parts that sort of bust out, but I think mostly they sing like J CHURCH and have a basic 3 chord thing going on, although they have a video game song which might bring on a headache. POINDEXTER is usually midtempo but even when they speed up they still play melodically easygoing punk. The main singing is in a pop punk snotty style, but sometimes he switches to high pitched screaming. SKAPEGOAT have 2 songs that are fast and thrashy with high pitched straining screaming going on. Then they have 2 songs that are like the one reggae song all punk bands used to play, slow and with talking the lyrics over the music bed. ($5 ppd.12 song CD, four songs per band. P. O. Box 184, Halltown, WV 25423-0184.)

CYNESS play slightly slower than blazing grindcore punk with chunky metal guitar, and on vocals they have the high and low pitched screamer dudes. They do AUTOPSY and NAPALM DEATH covers. (14 song cassette, lyric sheet. Fr. - Engels - Str. 53, 14482 Potsdam, Germany.)

DEADFALL keep steady at an early 7 SECONDS pace, but with a shouter instead of a singer. There's a bit of FINAL CONFLICT guitar noodling stuff going on, too. ($2 ppd. 7 song CD, no lyric sheet. 1600 Ortega, San Francisco, CA 94122.)

DEVIANT BEHAVIOR have the modern punk sharp production sound to their three chord driving punk, with some fancy guitar work thrown in. Dual male and female vocals, mostly shouting. Sounds like a rockaroll NAKED AGGRESSON. (10 song CD, no lyric sheet. 167 C. Columbus Dr. 3L, Jersey City, NJ 07302.)

THE DISTRESSED demo is all songs that are straight forward and simple, which is why it lends itself so easily to being instant sing along fest. Full of energy, although mostly midtempo, and "woah-oh"'s, they sound like they'd kick ass live. A little street punk, a little bit hardcore, and a lot of fuck you's. (5 song CD, no lyric sheet. 4012 Reynosa Drive, Austin TX 78739.)

ESKAPO are Jacqueline's pick of the month! They're the first band from the U.S. that we've heard sing in Tagalog/Filipino as well as english. They're songs are fast, and sometimes blazing, reminiscent of FUEL down to the full throat Mike Kirsch vocals. Slight pop influences in a couple of places, but plenty of hardcore influences, too. The choruses are anthemic and the lyrics in english are full of imagery without being corny or sappy.($4 ppd. 13 song CD, lyric sheet. 900 Southhampton #126, Benicia, CA 94510.)

EXTORTIONS are a pretty great back to basics punk of the late 70's catchy style. The songs are mostly midpaced, and catchy without being overly melodic. The vocals are spoken/shouted and they include a cover of "Now I want to be your dog". (9 song CD, no lyric sheet. 27022 CAlle Don Carlo, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675.)

Split demo between **THE FANTASY FOUR** and **JULIA SETS**. THE FANTASY FOUR are super pop band, with midtempo band of regular instruments, and sweet girl vocals, in the vein of HEAVENLY. JULIA SETS is more melancholy, and slower, with extended instrumental parts that remind me of scoring music for film or something, mood creating, you know? (6 song CD, three from each band, no lyric sheet. P. O. Box 39012, St. Louis, MO 63139.)

FEAST OR FAMINE's most notable quality is the ferocious double bass making appearances in most of their songs. They've got two singers, super sore throaty guy, and rabid guy, and the songs are generally fast, but the middle parts in the songs vary between slightly slower, and much faster than that. They also do a SEPTIC DEATH cover. (8 song cassette, no lyric sheet. 545 Fisher, G. P. City, MI 48230.)

THE FIRE play fast 80's style hardcore, think like the GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS with more of a driven guitar metal influence. They've got

shouted vocals, tight breaks and mosh parts, and seem to be perfect candidates for 625 Records. ($2 cash only. 4 song CD, lyric sheet. 348 N. Pleasant Pkwy., Buffalo, NY 14206.)

THE FULL GALLOP AUDIOZINE is ninety minutes of variety, with most of the music being played on acoustic guitars and other non-traditional for the punkers instrumentation, like pianos, fiddles, accordions, that sort of thing. For the purists, though, there's SHOTWELL, in the middle of a "anything can happen but this is what usually does" story by Iggy Scam that stops you in your tracks. Great. A documentary by Icky Ciccone might just be my favorite piece - the history of the po' boy, with excellent digestive noises, character actors, and includes good tips on the po ' boy for visitors to New Orleans. There's also investigative work by Dan Beckman about snake handling christians, and other random things going on (radio call in, answering machine messages, old interview snippets). Interesting, funny, educational, and fucking awesome. ($2, 90 minutes, and a zine to help you decipher what's going on. P.O. Box 582514, Minneapolis, MN 55458.)

Split demo between **HOG** and **INSURRECTION**. HOG sounds like PAGE 99. INSURRECTION have a spazzy singer and a gruff singer, and one song has mellow jangily guitar parts. Mostly they are fast paced driving hardcore. (5 songs on HOG side, 4 songs on INSURRECTION side of cassette, lyric sheet. APDO Postal #16-052. C. P. 02011, Mexico D. F., Mexico.)

IDLE YOUTH play basic guitar midtempo punk with dynamic vocals. They've got scream along parts, and some snotty/mocking bits a la Eve Libertine. Very AREA 51 without Spencer. ($3. 4 song CD, lyric sheet. 4228 Pine St. 2ond Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

IO are like JAWBREAKER stripped of any gruffness, maybe like that major label album they put out. The vocals are melodic, and musically the guitars are clean, and are balanced with the vocals for upfrontness in the mix.(7 song CD, lyric sheet. 5419 Farrington Rd., Chapel Hill, NC 27517.)

IMPRACTICAL COCKPIT is steadily following the road of THE MINUTEMEN, not the flashy bass parts but definitely D. Boon bursts of guitar. The drumming manages to keep a beat and add to the complexities of the melody at the same time. The vocals are of a yelling punchy sort, but still singing holding things out at the end of the sentence. (15 song cassette, lyric sheet. P. O. Box 582514, Minneapolis, MN 55458.)

JOHN WILKES BOOZE are driven by sin, and it comes out in sometimes slow and bluesy and sometimes boisterous party rockaroll songs. They've got an organ, and fervor. They cover Totally Wired by THE FALL and have great liner notes. ($3 ppd. 6 song cassette, no lyric sheet. P. O. Box 2161, Bloomington, IN 47402.)

KING LOUIE ONE MAN BAND is a self-explanatory name for what this demo's all about. Country spun raunchy with lots of cowbell (or maybe that's a coffee can), this is energetic, original and great. If the JON WAYNE BAND was one man, he might be this man. (14 song CD, no lyric sheet. P. O. Box 40005, Portland, OR, 97210.)

LORELEI sound like a perfect balance mix between STAR PIMP and SCRAWL, melodic and rock oriented, but more heavy and with surprising edges you wouldn't expect. Very good. (5 song CD, no lyric sheet. 366 Stratford Ave. #1B, Pittsburgh, PA 15232.)

THE MIDNIGHT CREEPS sound so much like FRIGHTWIG it's making me a little nostalgic. The music is really simple basic rock, midtempo, with some guitar wanking here and there, but definitely the vocals are the focal point of the band.(5 songs, no lyric sheet. P. O. Box 4083, Attlebore, MA 02703.)

McFADDEN'S PARACHUTE are on a label called Garagepop records, which just about exactly fits their style. Poppy and clean with lots of guitar solos, and a very present tambourine. They don't really cut loose like the modern garage revival. The vocals are melodic, wellsung and upfront, with lots of harmony to them. (15 song CD, lyric sheet. P. O. Box 88003, Rochester, NY 14618.)

THE ONCE OVER TWICE at first appeared to play emo with tinges of melody, but I think by the end of the CD the melodic side is what's really at their heart and the emo is mostly in the vocals - the heartfelt singer style not the screaming from the pain of life style. (4 song CD, lyric sheet. 43 Providence ST, Plymouth Devon PL4 8JQ.)

PITFALL! are firmly in the new school of hardcore, mixing up the pace and style, a bit of the ol thrash thrown in, but also melodic parts that the kids can really dance to. The vocals are urgent and they've also got a good sense of humor, based on song titles such as "Crusties don't wear flip flops". "They have something very silly to get off their chests right fucking now!" say Jacqueline and Doug. ($5 ppd. 15 song CD, no lyric sheet. 37 Edgecumb Rd., West Milford, NJ 07480.)

PRODUCT OF SOCIETY's artwork made us think we were getting into crusty vocals and wall of noise music, but do not judge the demo by its cover. The singer never gets more aggressive than Patrick from DILLINGER 4. He carries a tune like the DETONATORS over music going on like CHRIST ON A CRUTCH rockaroll influenced punk rock. We really like this. (8 song CD, no lyric sheet. 4444 NW 84 Ave, Coral Springs, FL 33065.)

RAISED UNDER REAGAN play melodic thrashy punk, midtempo, and Southern California sounding. D. I. came immediately to mind, but as the demo goes on they have more wo-wo-wo's than that, maybe a poppier BAD RELIGION with more guitar solos and less dead on harmonies. ($5 ppd. 7 song cassette, no lyric sheet. 2770 E. Vintah St. Apt. #302, Colorado Springs, CO 80909.)

REVOLUTION SUMMER sound like a mid 90's DC band, no surprise really with the name. They're all fast, no slow, with simple song structures and strongly guitar based. The vocals are heartfelt with lots of harmony present in the shouting, in a DAG NASTY kind of way. (5 song CD, lyric sheet. 119 Dulles Dr., Dumont, NJ 07628.)

REVOLUTION SUMMER also sent a split CD with **SCISSOR HANDS**. As you might guess, REVOLUTION SUMMER sounds a lot like their own CD, but this is a newer recording. It's a bit more sonic, and the vocals are more angry and less harmonic. SCISSORHANDS make a good pair with RS, same time frame seemed to have influenced them, but they have a straight forward and faster sound, more of a pissed off emo thing going on. (6 song CD, lyric sheet. 119 Dulles Dr., Dumont, NJ 07628.)

S.A.M. play good thrash songs with a heavy melodic component and they have a 3 second song. (6 song cassette, lyric sheet. Caixa Postal 2041, 79.008-970. Campo Grande/MS, Brasil.)

SQUAT TAG BANDA are a poppy band with ska parts to about half their songs. The guitar sound is so clean, amazing how weird that sounds after an afternoon of hardcore demos. The vocals are upfront, and singing, although sometimes they're more like classic ska style. It just depends on the song. (9 song cassette, lyric sheet. P. O. Box 64, 109147, Moscow, Russia.)

THE STUD DOGS play mostly slow and occasionally mid-tempo basic bar rock style with exact Stiv Bators vocals. I think I hear a keyboard thing going on in some songs, which are all about being a drunken fuck up. (8 song CD, lyric sheet. 11222 E. Colonial Dr. Suite 102, Orlando, FL 32817.)

THE UPSETS play catchy punk rock, in the same vein as, but not exactly sounding like THE NEWTOWN NEUROTICS. They have the same type of, singing style and lyrics, which are topical but not bumper sticker political. (2 song CD, lyric sheet. P. O. Box 354, Warringah mall, Brookvale 2100, N. S. W., Australia)

VENIAL I.V. bring on the youth crew thrash attack, more straight forward than BEHEAD THE PROPHET N. L. S. L. and no violin, but the energy and vocals are similar. Straight edge for the punks, instead of a bunch of jocks in hoodies. ($3 cassette, $5 CD. They sent me the 18 song CD, lyric sheet. P. O. Box 9263, Missoula MT 59807.)

THE WOODSMEN play rockaroll that, like RANCID VAT, begs you to be offended to give them fuel to rock out harder. Most of it's mid-tempo paced with guitar wanking present but mostly it's not out of control. Gruff vocals but he's still singing, and shout along vocal parts. (209 Carlisle Rd., Audubon, NJ 08106.)

TOP TEN PUNK RECORDS OF 2001

DONNA POOLE

FOUR EYES - "Hat Nerd" EP
KILL-A-WATTS - "Dig These Kids" EP
RIFFS - "A Million Scars" EP
LOS HUEVOS - "Stick 'Em Up" EP
SNOBS - "School's Out, Let's Skate!" EP
SLURS - "It Just Gets Worse" EP
LIMPWRIST - s/t LP
SIN DIOS - "Ingobernables" LP
WHITE STRIPES - "White Blood Cells" LP
BANANAS - "A Slippery Subject" CD

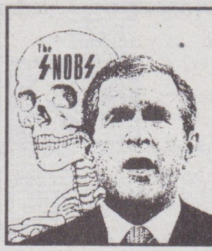
Memorable moments of 2001: the BANANAS performing "I'm A Banana" and "Spicy Jerk" while dodging flying breadsticks, strawberries, and a William Shatner standup doll, then the FOUR EYES being forced to play "Hat Nerd" over and over at my best friend's wedding reception...the guys at Better Youth Organization getting fed up with bully security goons and taking over the stage so the kids could dance and dive without getting their heads kicked in at an ANTI-FLAG and ONE MAN ARMY show in LA...dragging my flubug-riddled ass down to Mission Records to see LIMPWRIST play in a 120-degree room stuffed to capacity and not passing out from the heat...the San Jose cops calling out the cavalry, helicopters, and SWAT teams just to keep a hundred harmless punks from having fun at Bikes For Beers 666. —Donna

MIKE THORN

SPAZM 151 - "Freedom " LP
SIN DIOS - "Ingobernables" LP
TRAGEDY - "The Point of No Return" LP
DS-13 - "Killed By the Kids" LP
INNOXIA CORPORA - "Je Tezke Prst Otocit Proti Sobe" LP
APATIA NO - "Hazlo Tu Mismo" EP
SIN ORDEN - "Brutal Dad Juvenil" EP
HARUM SCARUM - "Suppose We Try" LP
TOTALITÄR/DISCLOSE - split LP
MANIFESTO JUKEBOX - "Desire" LP

Honorable Mention
LIMP WRIST "s/t" LP, FROM ASHES RISE "Silence" LP, BORN DEAD ICONS "Modern Plague" EP, GUYANA PUNCHLINE "Irritainment" LP, NINE SHOCKS TERROR "Pay Ohmage" LP

Narrowing this down to ten, er...fifteen, was nearly impossible but here's my best shot at it. Oh yeah, a few words about each: SPAZM 151, fuck, this is a ripper. Hard as nails, raw as fuck Texas punk. Perfect. Possibly the best album I've heard in a long fucking time. The TRAGEDY LP is totally explosive driving crust mixed with the right amount of melody. And pay attention, kids, they actually write *songs*, as opposed to just going for a sound and just stringing parts together. Probably one of the most powerful live band I've ever seen. SIN DIOS, from Spain, is a band more folx in the US should definitely be aware of, twelve years on and still at the top of their game. Raging anarcho punk, with the words and actions to back it up. DS-13, fuck man, from their first EP to this LP; they are the kings! Some folks say hardcore died in '86, but they've never seen this juggernaut of thrash mayhem. I saw INNOXIA CORPORA play in December when I was in Europe. I wasn't really planning on watching them but midway through their set I figured I'd check them out and my fucking jaw hit the floor—totally driving melodic punk from the Czech Republic. No worries if you never get to see them live 'cause their LP more than does them justice: abso-fuckin'-lutely explosive! Then there's APATIA NO!, a raw uncompromising hardcore band from Peru. I came across five of their records this year—all of which rule, but the title track of their *Hazlo Tu Mismo* EP is a modern fucking anthem, so it gets the nod. Continuing in the tradition of Chicago hardcore that was reignited by the likes of LOS CRUDOS, MK ULTRA, and CHARLES BRONSON is SIN ORDEN. Their EP lays waste to everything in its path and their live set was a must-see—too bad they will have played their last show by the time this sees print. HARUM SCARUM: melodic, passionate, and anthemic...this record is a modern gem drawing on a wide range of influences, a totally classic punk record. The TOTALITÄR/DISCLOSE split proves there are no finer bearers of the banner once hoisted by DISCHARGE. from the pounding attack of the first track on the TOTALITÄR side, which threatens to cave in your skull from sheer ferocity, to the sonic face-melting fury of DISCLOSE's d-beat madness. MANIFESTO JUKEBOX—Finland's answer to HÜSKER DÜ. Sweeping melodies and passionate lyrics. Seriously amazing record—they're supposed to do a US tour this year and I'll be there front and center. LIMPWRIST. Gay? Straight edge? You bet, one of the best live bands with biting commentary on the the rampant tendency toward homophobia in the hardcore punk scene combined with NEGATIVE APPROACH meets NEGAZIONE styled hardcore for a potent mix. Finally a band that puts the "core" back in "homocore." FROM ASHES RISE's LP and live set simply and absolutely crushing. BORN DEAD ICONS feature haunting driving punk with echoes of AMEBIX, MOTORHEAD, and the WIPERS (who they cover on the EP). Amazing stuff. GUYANA PUNCHLINE mixes the FEEDERZ with modern day throw-a-fucking shitfit screamo™. One of the most essential and original bands going. The NINE SHOCKS TERROR LP has more hooks and slightly less thrash than their prior record, but still clocks in as an essential listen. They wear their influences on their sleeves and when is is such powerful rockers as the STALIN, LIPCREAM, and every Italian hardcore record that ever mattered it's not a bad thing. OK, that's that, fuck, only 15. I could probably rattle off another 20 if I pushed. Despite some folks stating to the contrary, 2001 was a fucking amazing year for punk. Oh hell, here's seven more honorable mentions: NO PARADE "Night Sticks and Justice EP, BURNING KITCHEN's "Damn You If You Do, Damn You If You Don't" 10", SNOBS "School's Out, Let's Skate" EP, LIFE'S HALT/WHN? "Start Something" LP, BANANAS "A Slippery Subject" CD, PHANTOM LIMBS LP and NATIONAL RAZOR "Finally Death Is Coming" LP. Oh yeah, and WASTED "Suppress and Restraint" LP. OK...I'm done. —Mike Thorn



RAY LUJAN

PROPAGANDHI - "Tomorrow's Empires" LP
SERPICO - "Everyone" CD
RIFF RANDALLS - both EPs
STRIKE ANYWHERE - "Change" CD
PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES - "3 Away" EP
LOVEJUNK - "Tribulations" CD
YELLOWCARD - "One For the Kids" CD
BIG IN JAPAN - "Destroy the New" CD
YUM YUMS - "Singles" CD
LOS OLVIDADOS - "Listen to This!!" CD

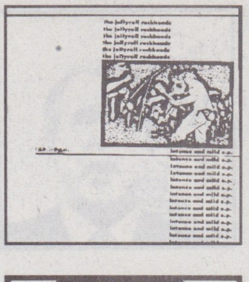
Honorable Mention
ATARIS "End is Forever" CD, TRAVOLTAS "Teenbeat" CD, GENERATORS "Tyranny" LP, PERFECT DAZE "Five Year Scorch" CD, SATURDAY SUPERCADE "Everyone" CD, EXCESSORIES "Pure Pop" CD and the Captain Oi! label reissues.

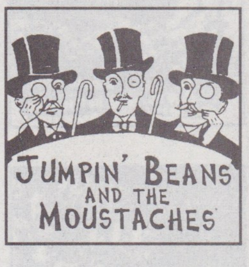
Some familiar names and a few new ones. My list is pretty full-length heavy since I've grown weary of the "one good 45" crisis of fave bands that turned out to be pretty bad after all. Where have all the gal singers gone? They make up just a small percentage here and I'm very gal-friendly. The great LOS OLVIDADOS from 1983 finally got a real release out although I think this is coming out on a larger scale down the road. Long live the class of The Sound of Music! Captain Oi! never ceased to amaze me with its great reissues of old brit stuff with bonus tracks as well as proper approval from all involved. This seemed like the year of the bootleg reissue. If people are booting these for the music, then why the hell are these boots so expensive? It sure as hell isn't the high royalty rate! Although I have done my ranting on many a band throughout the year, this stack of releases stayed in my play pile year round. In fact, if I added GET UP KIDS, JIMMY EAT WORLD, TSAR, MANIC STREET PREACHERS and CREEPER LAGOON from the other side of the tracks that would pretty much round out my musical year. Although I have been on an old new wave/techno pop binge of late. Hey keyboards are finally cool!

ROB COONS

Damn, what a crazy year it has been. It seems like the endless assault of new music never ends. And with the resurgence of hardcore throughout the world it is nearly impossible to keep up with everything that is coming out. Not only that, but I can't afford to keep up. If I went out and bought all the records I really wanted, I would be thousands of dollars in debt.

As you can imagine, it is nearly impossible to narrow down all of your favorites and choose a year-end top 10. There are actually a few records that I have excluded from this top ten. In all honesty, releases like SOILENT GREEN's "A Deleted Symphony For The Beaten Down," CONVERGE's "Jane Doe," NEUROSIS's "A Sun That Never Sets" or FANTOMAS's "Director's Cut" could have easily replaced almost any of the records on the list. But I wanted to concentrate on things that have been reviewed in this magazine. One thing that sort of bummed me out about this year-end top ten was that no live bands were allowed. But how could I let this slip by without a





mention of a few of the amazing bands I saw this year? Seeing TRAGEDY, CRUCIAL SECTION, LIFES HALT, STATE OF FEAR, BOTCH, PINHEAD GUNPOWDER, WALLS OF JERICHO, XBXRX, VITAMIN X, WHN?, SHIKABANE, TEAR IT UP, FACTION, DS-13, JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS, EXCLAIM, LIMPWRIST, CATTLE DECAPITATION, and R.A.M.B.O. all made this year slip by a little easier. So let's waste no more time and get this fucker rolling.

NK 6 – "Keep On Keeping On" LP
I swear every time I listen to this record the hairs on the back of my neck stand on end. This is Japanese hardcore at its absolute finest. It is all here, from the savage drumming to the eruption of manic guitar and bass playing with those crazed choppy breaks that makes Japanese punk music so unique. From the start to the finish NK6 attack your ears with a ferocious blast of unrelenting punk and thrash. When I reviewed this for MRR a few months ago, I swore that it sounded a lot like GAUZE, especially the most recent GAUZE LP. After a few more listens I still think that is true and I think that comparison should be taken as the highest compliment. This is a fucking ace release!

LIMPWRIST – "What's Up With The Kids" EP & s/t LP
I have known about this band for quite some time. A while ago somebody played me a tape of LIMPWRIST's first live show, and showed me a lyric sheet. Needless to say with the combination of blazing fast and frantic hardcore and lyrics full of anger, humor, and intelligence, I could just tell that this band was going to be special (and very popular). Obviously I was immediately hooked. I kept trying to get my hands on a demo or something. But I had to wait until the first EP came out until I heard them again. During their recent and brief West Coast tour I got to see them twice. It was refreshing to see them with the closet door wide open on their sexuality and to hear Martin's between-set banter. I only wish their claws dug a little deeper into the fragment of the punk and hardcore scene. I feel like sexuality has continued to stay on the fringes of most punk and hardcore bands' politics. I wish there were more prominent gay-positive bands in hardcore. Because let's face it, sadly, homosexuality still makes many people very uncomfortable, even within the confines of the punk and hardcore scene.

JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS – "Intense & Mild" EP & "Kill Trend Thrash" EP & split EP with EXCLAIM
I specifically remember hearing them for the very first time over at the MRR house. I just sat there with my mouth agape not quite sure what had just jumped out of the speakers and hit me over the head. It was totally amazing Japanese thrashcore that was catchy as all hell. The band name was genius. Their hilarious lyrics (with that ever-present JapEnglish) were brilliant. Fuck it, I am willing to put in a vote for their song "Ganja Boy (Smoke Out)" as being the one of the songs of the year. You just have to hear it in order to understand just how rad the drumming in that song is. Total blurcore that flies by at the speed of lightning! When they came over to play this year I checked them out as many times as I could. Their energy was amazing as they bounced off the walls and each other and sent the crowd into a mad frenzy. There are only two words left to say. Fuck yeah!

TEAR IT UP – "Just Can't Stand It" LP & the other million releases they have put out this year
Whoa! I have been following these guys since those early DEAD NATION EPs came out, and as they have evolved into TEAR IT UP they just keep getting better and better. This is by far one of the best straight-up hardcore records of the year. These songs are all well executed and they diversify their sound with a ton of hooks and a touch of melody. But let's not kid ourselves here, the basis of their style is explosive speed and outrage. I know a lot of their musical taste has a foot firmly planted in 80s punk music and it definitely shows in their music. The more I listen to this, the more I realize how well written the songs are and just how catchy it all is. I know they have more new material on the way so get ready to buy.

DS-13 – "Killed By The Kids" EP
Ah yes, everybody's favorite thrash band comes through again with another amazing full-length release. This quartet has been making serious waves (no, make that tsunamis) since their very first release. With their second full-length release you get 22 more songs of brilliantly played punk rock. The guitar distortion and pounding bass lines raise the roof with a nod to a multitude of old school thrash, punk, and hardcore bands. DS-13 definitely wear their influences well. As they crank things up to full blast the vocalist blares out a mix of serious and not so serious rants. They touch on everything from skating to the feminist struggle. One read through the lyrics will show that their sense of humor is well intact. All of this combined with the quality Pushead cover art makes for one killer release.

STACK – "Konkret Lichtgeschwindigkeit" CD
This has to be the most underrated band and record on my year end top ten. I have heard STACK on various other releases and I have always been into them. But nothing could prepare me for this savage release. There are a total of 18 songs and they average out to 49 seconds each! And these aren't some wimpy and thin-sounding songs either. These are short sharp shocks of thickly produced blast beat grind/hardcore. STACK's sheer speed and crazed urgency reminds me a lot of DROP DEAD. The rest of this CD is made up of their EP, split tracks and some compilation material and in my opinion it is all really, really good. But fuck man, those first 18 songs alone could flatten a small city.

TRAGEDY – "Point Of No Return" LP
You know I hesitated putting this in my top ten because I feel like these guys get so much hype already that it is almost overkill. But you know what, fuck that idea. Believe the hype, because this record absolutely destroys. By now, everybody and their brother knows that TRAGEDY rose from the ashes of HIS HERO IS GONE. They took many of the strongest elements of that band and melded them into TRAGEDY. The flawless song structures, staggering production, seething vocals and well thought out lyrics combine for a mind-boggling release. The music is a tangled mix of haunting instrumentals, plodding grind and turbulent hardcore. And when they play live they are just as good as if not better than they are on vinyl. These are anthems for the downtrodden. Prepare to be annihilated.

V/A – "More Than An X" box set of six EPs
When I first saw this box set at MRR I really couldn't believe my eyes. I have been listening to straight edge hardcore for many years and though I have many complaints about it, I truly love it. Yet I have never really seen anything quite like this. I mean I have seen a multitude of international hardcore compilations before, but nothing dedicated to the straight edge genre on this scale. Just the detail in the packaging alone is mindblowing. The layout used on everything from the record sleeves to the booklet is killer. And the bands! Have you ever heard of straightedge bands from Costa Rica, Russia, West Malaysia, South Korea, Indonesia, or Columbia? No? Me either. The line-up is incredible. IN THE CLEAR, FUERZA DE VOLUNTAD, STRENGTH APPROACH, OUT OF STEP, UNDERFIRE, VIEJA ESCUELA, RED KEDGE, NEW WINDS, FAST YOUTH, CON VISION, RESOURCES, GOOD CLEAN FUN, CROSSING POINT, THE ANSWER IS STILL NO, FUED, ACCION POSITIVA, TRUNCHBULL, NEGATIVE IMPACT, MATCHPOINT, BLIND TO SEE, INSPIRE, BURDEN, NEW BREED, PURPURA, THE GEEKS, H-STREET, STRIKEPOINT, SELF DEFENCE, CIRCLE AGAIN, SLOWDOWN, B'67, FUERZA X, TURNOVER, TILL I DIE, ONE X MORE, CLEAN, EVIDENCIA, DSM, UNEVEN, SECOND AGE, and VITAMIN X all contribute to this compilation. Another great thing about this compilation is that almost all of the bands are of the hard/fast/youth/thrash core variety. There is really not much bad chugga chugga metal to get in the way of a fingerpointing and circle-pitting good time.

625 Productions – (all releases)
Holy fuck how does he do it! "Marathon Man" Max Ward has cut loose with some of the finest releases of the year. And the most amazing thing of it all is just how many there were, plus there are no signs of him slowing down. I mean just look at the following releases to get a grasp of what he has done this year. JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS/EXCLAIM split EP, V/A – "Murderous Grind Compilation" CD, WHN/LIFES HALT – split LP, EDORA – "Tomorrow Is Ours" EP, SCHOLASTIC DETH – "Shackle Me Not" EP, HIGHSCORE "1997-2000" CD, REAL REGGAE – "Maze Plus THC" CD, L.I.E. – LP, R.A.M.B.O "Wall of Death the System" LP, IMMORTAL FATE – "Beautiful" LP, DUMBSTRUCK – "We All Fall Down" LP... fuck, I am sure I am even missing a few of them! And on top of all of that he is in a bunch of bands, doing tours, working, writing for zines, etc. I can tell you this, if you are into thrash and fastcore then you can just go on blind faith and pick up every 625 release without any hesitation. I can't praise 625 Productions enough!

RAW POWER – "Screams From The Gutter" Reissue LP
Damn, where do I start on this one? Back in the mid-80s, this was the first punk record I ever bought. The local college radio station where I first heard punk used to play RAW POWER a lot. At the time RAW POWER seemed so unique to me, because they were the perfect mix of thrash, punk, and metal, and the music was just so damn aggressive. I finally tracked the original LP down in some shitty little record store in my town, took it home and was immediately hooked for life. The music hit me like a speeding semi-truck. Wild rolling drums pumped out the pace, while a flurry of chaotic guitar work blew the songs through the roof. Mauro's vocals sounded crazed and angry, and were easy to shout along to while I rocked out in my room. Fuck, I still get chills when I listen to the intro of "We're All Gonna Die." It is one of those songs that makes you feel like you are about to jump out of your own skin. In all honesty, I rarely pull out the RAW POWER records these days, because I am so busy listening to all the new stuff I get. But when I do it casts me away into a dreamland of perfect circle pits and wild stage dives. I was glad to see this limited vinyl reissue come out, and I hope you all bought one.

CAROLYN KEDDY

SUPERHELICOPTER - "Rock'n'Roll Damnation" 10"
THE MIGHTY MOGULS - "Teenage Party with The Mighty Moguls" CD
DIRTBOMBS - "Ultraglide In Black" LP

JUMPIN' BEANS AND THE MOUSTACHES/SOMEBODY AND THE SOMETHINGS - split EP
LOST SOUNDS - "Memphis Is Dead" and "Black Wave" LPs
ROCK AND ROLL ADVENTURE KIDS - "Wildman" EP
DAN MELCHIOR'S BROKE REVUE - "Heavy Dirt" LP
THE BUFF MEDWAYS - "This is This" LP
GOSPEL SWINGERS - "Mississippi" EP
LOS HUEVOS - "Stick 'Em Up" EP

I wanted to just name Superhelicopter band of the year and leave it at that. They released my favorite records of 2001. The 10" was the first I heard and will always be my favorite. I absolutely love it when a band looks really stupid on the cover, has one of those names that sounds kind of generic or they're from Sweden, and proceeds to kick my ass with fantastically trashy rock and roll. Also around are four 7"s, most released under the name Superhelicopter Ltd., but each equally great.

The Mighty Moguls were another great surprise. I wasn't very lucky with review CDs this year, but fortunately I ended up with this one. The Mighty Moguls are so fantastic; I just can't stop talking about them. People are always asking me what new records they should get and sometimes I will have a hard time coming up with something. With The Mighty Moguls, I was telling people before they had a chance to ask. Sounds like a female, slightly poppier version of Teengenerate. The best female vocals of the year!

Dirtbombs have been on every top ten I've read this year and deservedly so. It's about time Mick Collins starts getting more credit for the fantastic music he makes. It was quite a year for him, with Dirtbombs releasing this wonderful album plus a couple of great singles and the Screws' "Shake Your Monkey." The Dirtbombs' San Francisco show last August was my favorite of the year. A few people have been overly critical, saying that "Ultraglide In Black" is almost all covers and Mick plays out of tune (that's what people say- it sounds fine to me), but I say "Who the fuck cares?"—it's a great album.

One of the best and worst aspects of working at MRR is hearing truly great records and then never being able to track down a copy for myself. Jumpin' Beans and The Moustaches/Somebody and the Somethings was one of those records. Amazing trashy rock and roll in an edition of 100. Heartbreaking, but at least I know where there is a copy I can listen to whenever I want.

When I heard that Jay Reatard was doing a new wave band, I was a little worried. Reatards were so fantastic, why would he want to start using keyboards? No need for me to worry. I get all the screaming I love along with some great melodies. Alicia is the second best female vocalist of the year. Everyone has to admit that two great albums in one year is pretty cool. Another great live show I saw this year too.

Rock and Roll Adventure Kids were being hailed in these pages as the next Mummies. They are a couple of brats blasting out some great garage rock without a care for anyone. Wonderful. I love Dan Melchior's voice. The songs are slow brooding garage with his very distinct vocal style. I listen to this album at least once a day.

Buff Medways is Billy Childish's latest band since the break up of the Headcoats. I can't believe how many amazing songs this guy has in him. Did I mention they're love songs? They are and I still like them. Any band named after a chicken is very cool. Another great show from 2001.

Gospel Swingers' "Mississippi" is one of those amazing songs that every time you hear it, you wonder, "Who is this?" then you realize you've heard it a million times before. I fall for it every time.

Los Huevos "Stick 'Em Up" EP is supposedly the last recordings that will ever be released. I say *supposedly* because I'm an optimist. This is some of the best stuff they've done. How can this be the end?

I'd like to give honorable mentions to Tearjerkers "Bad Mood Rising" LP, Deadly Snakes "I'm Not Your Soldier Anymore" LP, Easy Action s/t LP, Stupor Stars "Poison Arrow" EP, and Andy G and The Roller Kings 10". It was a great year for rock and roll.

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

MANIFESTO JUKEBOX - "Desire" LP
THE GOSSIP - "That's Not What I Heard" LP
CONFLICT - "Now You've Put Your Foot In It" EP
LIFE'S HALT/WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? - split LP
THE JONES - "Gravity Blues" LP
ERASE ERRATA - "Cat and Canary" EP
RED MONKEY - "Get Uncivilised" EP
JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS - "Kill Trend Thrash" EP
THE UNIFORM - "Black and Vain" LP
LIMPWRIST - s/t LP

It's the end of a fucked up year...

Was 2001 a good year for anyone? It's been the worst year I can remember. So much death. How can I write about the year's music? Sure, plenty of critics are going to be waxing lyrical about the current/next/last month's big thing...blah blah blah the Strokes, blah blah the White Stripes, blah blah the Hives... I can't really get it up for that right now.

It's true that music can help get us through the tough times, but we normally turn to the old standbys. In these times of war and the propaganda and the rebirth of McCarthyism that accompanies it, it's the Minutemen I turn to, as well as the music of the 60s, like the Stooges and the MC5. In April, when Joey Ramone died, all I wanted to hear was the Ramones first LP. And when a family member passed away this year, the songs of Johnny Cash helped us mourn.

That said, here's a few live favorites whose noise and energy helped me forget the horrors of the world this past year: The Gossip, The Ex, Raw Power, What Happens Next?, Sleater-Kinney, The Basement League, Reagan SS, Jellyroll Rockheads, Belle & Sebastian, Mike Watt. Thanks to those bands and people.

I sincerely hope that 2002 is a better year for the world. I'm not too optimistic, though.
Peace, Allan McNaughton

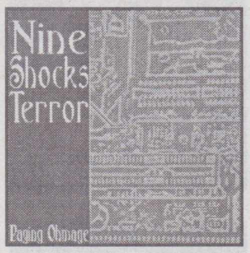
FLOYD. JUST FLOYD.

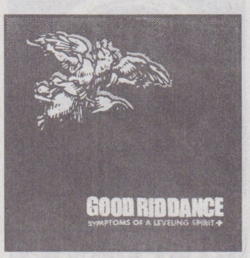
FOUR EYES - "Hat Nerd" EP
Simple, catchy, melodic punk that gets better with every listening. If you don't like it, lie to me and tell me you do.
LIMPWRIST - s/t LP
Worth it for the booklet alone. One powerful 12".
DIRTBOMBS - "Ultraglide In Black" LP
In a year that also saw fine cover records put out by the **DETROIT COBRAS and ME FIRST AND THE GIMME GIMMES**, this one takes the cake. R&B, punk, soul, or just good old fashioned rock n' roll, this record is just fantastic.
GOOD RIDDANCE "Symptoms Of A Leveling Spirit" LP
Melodic yet powerful, "Symptoms Of a Leveling Spirit" has just the right blend. Its MRR review stated that this band is putting the nail in the coffin of hardcore. Well, suddenly I am not scared of death anymore.
THE TONE - "Here's Another Reason...To Believe in Rock N' Roll" LP
I doubt that if the CLASH were to get back together and do another record it would be this good. The best release out of the UK this year.
BURST - "Conquest: Writhe" CD
More NEUROSIS than HIS HERO IS GONE, Sweden's BURST delivered on this album. Dark yet crushingly beautiful. I actually prefer the CD version put out by Prank, if only because it includes one rocking UNSANE cover.
LOST SOUNDS - "Black Wave" LP
This band, along with the PHANTOM LIMBS, will reunite the goth, new wave, and punk crowds again. Dark, poppy, and downright creepy. This band was very prolific in 2001, and proved that not all the Memphis talent has moved to Portland.
GC5 - "Horseshoes and Hand Grenades" CDEP
This CD, clocking in at just about 13 minutes, will test the durability of the format based on the amount of times this thing gets played. Leftist street punk sung with great passion and feeling. A knock you on your ass release.
9 SHOCKS TERROR - "Paying Ohmage" LP
The best Japanese hardcore record put out last year, even if it is by an American band.
TINA & THE TOTAL BABES - "She's so Tuff" LP
Bubblegum, ear candy, this record is sweet.

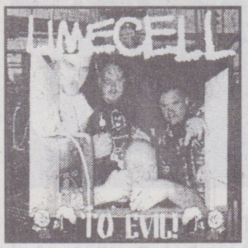
No matter how I slice it, 2001 was an awesome year for music. Just a list of the stuff that didn't make it can tell you that: DS-13, PHANTOM LIMBS, COME ONS, PROPAGANDHI, SCREWS, GUYANA PUNCHLINE, etc. Any of those titles should be making a punk dance around with joy. So here is my top ten for 2001 (note: I didn't include reissues, discographies, or stuff that didn't get reviewed in this mag in the first place...though you should all buy the new FUGAZI.) So rock on, and remember the kids still have it. —Floyd

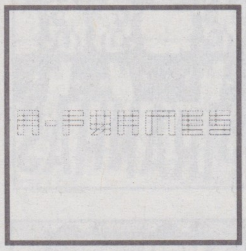
BRUCE ROEHRS

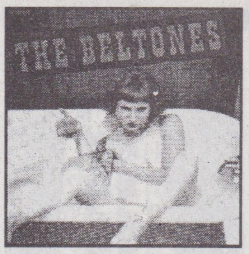
TEMPLARS - "The Horns of Hattin" CD
The TEMPLARS came to life back in the early 90s with Carl Fritscher and Phil Rigaud, creating a skinhead/clockwork mythology in the Acre Studio in Bayshore, New York,. Beginning with the 1993 "Poor Knights of Acre" EP on Sonic Aggression Records, and through releases on Vulture Rock Records (1995) and Headache Records (1996) the TEMPLARS have gone on to become the most revered skinhead band in the world. Extensive touring in Europe has brought fame, fortune, and lots of pussy to the Poor Knights of Templar. In the continuing campaign to expand the international realm of the TEM-

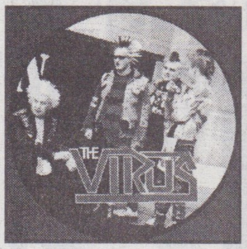


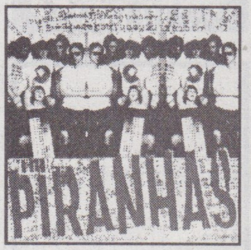












PLARS, GMM Records from Atlanta, Georgia has put out the "The Horns of Hattin" CD. This is far and away the best skinhead release of last year!. Songs like "Shift the Blame," "H Street," "Nowhere To Play," "Consequences," "Enemies," and "Ockham's Razor" cement the TEMPLARS' reputation as number one! A brilliant CD from start to finish!

LIMECELL - "To Evil Live" CD
These bad men from Philadelphia, PA, have conquered the punk rock world and now the Confederacy of Scum world. Listen to the sentiments on "You're Not Punk, You're Dirty," "Just Plain Pissed," or "Let's Just End It," and you will agree that these guys are some no-nonsense individuals. LIMECELL also released the "If We Can't Rock, It's War" CD last year on Steel Cage Records from Hostile City (Philadelphia), USA, and this fucker starts out with a bang on the song "Walking Dead Man," about thieving, scheming junkies. LIMECELL and ANTiSEEN brought their dangerous stage show to the West Coast last year, and it was stunning! In a live setting, Kevin, Steve, Bob, Benny, Perfect, and LIMECELL hammer on you the moment they hit the stage!

ANTiSEEN - "The Boys From Brutalsville" LP
The longest running Confederacy of Scum outfit—nineteen years and counting— ANTiSEEN released a great record on TKO Records last year. Listen to "Guns Ablazin'," "Melting Pot," "Smoke and Fire," "Sabu," "Babyface Killer," or "Backlash," and you will understand why these country boys from the Carolinas have not only survived, they have prevailed. ANTiSEEN covers "Commando" by the RAMONES on this record, and this version comes straight from hell! When Mr. Jeff Clayton implies that you should get the fuck out of his way in "Run My World," only a fool would not grasp the severity of the situation! ANTiSEEN are still the Kings of Destructo Rock!

REDUCERS SF - "Crappy Clubs and Smelly Pubs" LP
San Francisco's finest export, the REDUCERS SF, are the leaders of the pub punk/skinhead legions in these parts. No one else in the Bay Area has the ability to speak to "everyman" about the day-to-day travails of working class life. Listen to Glen, Mike, Kevin, and Scott communicate with their fans in "No Control." The futility of pursuing material possessions is stripped bare for all to see. This is a great record from San Francisco's best band!

BONECRUSHER - "Followers Of a Brutal Calling" LP
Fucking BONECRUSHER was brought to your attention in 1996 with their "The Animal" EP on Hostage Records. This blood-curdling EP stood Orange County, California, on its ear! In the years that followed, BONECRUSHER has grown to unbelievable strength! With the demise of the US BOMBS, BONECRUSHER became number one in OC. Raybo and his cronies were *the* force to be reckoned with in Southern California. They no longer function as a touring unit, but the band left behind a startling legacy of rock-hard punk records. Be sure to pick up some vinyl by these knuckleheads; this shit rocks like a motherfucker!

SUBWAY THUGS - "Who the Fuck Are You?" EP
The SUBWAY THUGS were the pride of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. This band was quite popular with the local skins 'n punks! The "Who the Fuck Are You?" posthumous release by Mike, Greg, and company makes us lament the retirement of the SUBWAY THUGS. These older recordings remind us of those heady days back in 1998 and 1999 when skinhead music was really taking off on the West Coast.

MUD CITY MANGLERS - "Tired of Fucking Losing" 45
The MUD CITY MANGLERS released a punk single in 2001 that will continue to burn your ears off for at least three decades. The "Tired of Fucking Losing" backed with "How Do You Know?"(a LYRES cover) 45 on 007/Subarton Records fucking scorches the planet! The MUD CITY MANGLERS came to life in the swamps of Pittsburgh back in 1996 and have proceeded to destroy punk clubs, consume copious amounts of drugs and alcohol, and go home with the best-looking girls in every piece-of-shit town they ventured into. This single continues the mayhem. Go see the MUD CITY MANGLERS before they are banned from your town!

VIRUS - "The Time is Now" EP
The VIRUS, from Philadelphia, have been a big punk rock success on Charged Records. The new VIRUS EP, "The Time is Now," is a marvelous picture disc on Punk Core Records out of Middle Island, NY. It's a strong follow up to last year's great "Still Fighting For a Future" LP. These guys kick ass!

ANTIDOTE - "Go Pogo" LP
These Chaos punks from the NETHERLANDS take the award for European spikes and studs punk rock. Jake and Charged Records out of New Jersey followed up the excellent "My Life" LP from 1999 with the punk rock "Go Pogo" disc. Good shit!

CHARGE 69 - "Vos Lois ne Sont pas Nos Regles" LP
This French punk band has been entertaining the punks as well as the skinheads for seven years. Combat Rock Records put out the "Patchwork" EP in 1995 and the momentum has continued to increase since then. With the Knock Out Records' release of "Vos Lois ne Sont pas Nos Regles," CHARGE 69 take their rightful place at the top of the heap of European punk bands along with OXYMORON. Songs like "Torgau," "Against the Wall," and "Insouciance" have confirmed what a lot of punks already knew—volatile, high-volume punk rock runs through CHARGE 69's veins!

Hall of Fame:
BELTONES - "Cheap Trinkets" LP & "Shitty in Pink" 45
BOVVER WONDERLAND - "Forgotten" CD
DEVILSKINS - "Porca Troia" EP
TROOPERS - "TROOPERS" LP
OXYMORON - "Feed the Breed" LP
APPREHENDED VIOLENCE ORDER/BLURTERS split EP
ANTI-HEROS - "Underneath the Underground" CD
BLOODY SODS - "Get Outta My Head" CD
ADOLF & THE PISS ARTISTS - "Zero" CD
TERMINUS CITY - "My Castle" EP
SMOGTOWN - "Domesticviolenceland" LP
STITCHES -"Four Songs From the Stitches" 12"
NIBLICK HENBANE - "Go Away" LP
WRETCHED ONES - "Goin' Down the Bar" live EP
HEADWOUND - " The Early Years" CD
HAMMERLOCK - "Barefoot and Pregnant" CD
LIFE ALIVE - "The Winning Hand" 45
DOROCHYS - "Black Out Records Number One" CD
FORGOTTEN - "Keep the Corpses Quiet" LP
SNOBS - "Schools Out" EP
SOUL BOYS - "Fuck You, We Are the Boys" EP
SNIPERS - "From the Tombs" EP

REMA YOUNG

THE CHERRY VALANCE - s/t LP
Best band name. Best super high-pitched male vocals.
SCARED OF CHAKA - "Crossing With Switchblades" LP
Catchiest. Best car tape ever.
MUD CITY MANGLERS - "Tired Of Losing/How Do You Know" 45
Best Pennsylvania band since the Steel Miners. Most booze-friendly.
DIRTBOMBS - "Ultraglide In Black" CD
Coolest. Best soul-punk, double bass, white jeans, black sunglasses wonderland.
DEADLY SNAKES - "I'm Not Your Soldier" LP
Best anything named after snakes.
NOW TIME DELEGATION - "Watch For" LP
Best pipes (Lisa Kekaula). Cutest feet (Lisa Kekaula). Best thing since BIG BOYS (Tim Kerr).
SMASH UP DERBY - "Sounds Of Self Defense" LP
Most fun since getting off work.
BELTONES - "Shitty In Pink" 45 and "Cheap Trinkets" LP
Best American, but Irish-sounding band.
EXXON VALDEZ - "Unreleased Fever By Professional Wankers" CD
Best testosterone levels for something French.
COMETS ON FIRE - s/t LP
Best whacked-out echoplex Santa Cruz representatives.

MARK MURRMAN

DETROIT COBRAS - "Love, Life, Leaving" LP (Sympathy)
TEENAGE REJECTS - "Don't Care About Anything" EP (Rip Off)
DEL GATORS - "Pound Down" LP (Sympathy)
MONARCHS - "2001" EP (Penniman)
GIMMIES - "Get It Right Now" EP (Screaming Apple)
HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE - "Hits Mot Folkgruppe" EP (Wrench)
KILL-A WATTS - "Dig These Kids" EP (Yakisakana)
LOST SOUNDS - "Black Wave" 2xLP (Empty)
SPITS - "19 Million Years AC" "Dirtnap"
ANDY G. & THE ROLLER KINGS - s/t 10" (Sympathy)

SCOTT SORIANO

Keyboards:
First, let me state I like keyboards. I like old 60s organs and I like the gurgle and spurt you get out of synthesizers. What I don't like is keyboard as novelty instrument. Like a bass or drums, it shouldn't be the first thing you hear in a band; it should be part of the band. And come up with some decent parts for them to play, or leave them at home. Instruments shouldn't be props, unless you have an "air" band.
Phantom Limbs live:
It has been years since I've seen a band take over a show and become the only thing anyone is paying attention to. The 'Limbs show at Primo's in Sacramento was the best show I saw all year. Swirling dementia (with keyboards done right) and a singer from hell, baiting the audience and coming out champ.
Punk without walls:
Before the mid-80s punk/metal crossover, which lead punk into a hundred different genre ghettos, punk was a wide open

field. Black Flag was punk and so were the Sun City Girls and the Birthday Party and Throbbing Gristle. Anything musically at the fringe was under the punk umbrella. It made for an interesting time and a very vital music scene. It seems as if that spirit is making its way back into punk. Let's hope that punk's flirtation with imagination doesn't die on the vine.

Free jazz:
Love it. Too me the energy is as exciting as a great punk band. That is, if it is played by people who know how to play. When punkers pick up a saxophone and start a honkin' and a hootin' it's boring. I don't want to hear from you unless you play something interesting and in order to play something interesting you need to know how to play.

The Bananas:
Being from Sacramento, of course I am biased. I am also right in proclaiming my yellow friends one of the best rock'n roll bands around. They are one of the only bands that writes catchy songs, is funny without being zany, and is a gas to see live, while tapping into the DIY ethos you find in 60s teen garage bands. The BUGS of the new millennium!

Vinyl:
I am hooked, hopelessly hooked and happy that not much vinyl is getting made. After the glut of the 90s, the relatively few vinyl releases means that a greater percentage that I lay my hands on are good.

Good vinyl:
As this was supposed to be a list of records, here's some stuff I found worth
listening to this year:
BLUTT 7" on Royal
THE STENCH BAND "Pray for Fred" LP
SIGHTINGS 7" on Freedom From
NAZIS FROM MARS LP
BILLY SYNDROME "Now" LP
CLONE DEFECTS LP,
PIRANHAS 7" on R&R Blitzkrieg, and a few other things.

More good vinyl:
I found some great used things and cheap, too: Manfred Man Chapter Three LP, Loading Zone-One For All LP, Maxayn LP, a very cool John Lennon/Yoko Ono LP on Zapple, and lots more.

KDVS:
Fifteen miles west of Sacramento is KDVS, the student run radio station for UC Davis and, I think, the only 100% free form station west of the Mississippi. You can hear everything and anything on 90.3 if you are in the area. If you live outside Sacto, try www.kdvs.org. One of the things that makes living here good.

Another year has passed and with it a handful of good vinyl, wisps of fine memories, and a lard load of complaints. Above is my attempt to spell out the top ten things that affected me. Unless I say so, the items on the list are neither likes or dislikes, just things that had an impact. And, while they are all music related, not all of them are consumable. —Scott Soriano

RYAN WELLS

CHARM CITY SUICIDES - s/t LP (Vermin Scum)
The CHARM CITY SUICIDES LP is a fantastic scraping annoyance of a record that brings to mind a violent combination of the ICKY BOYFRIENDS and early YAH-MOS. Off-kilter vocals and an alternately busy and droning guitar-based poosh makes it my favorite full-length of the year. Gee, Vermin Scum is still around?

LOST SOUNDS - "Memphis Is Dead" LP (Big Neck)
They put out three LPs worth of intensely invigorating depression this year. You could pick up the "Black Wave' double LP on Empty and replicate the effect of this one, which was put out by Big Neck. Doom synth punk done right.

SPITS - s/t EP (self-released)
I'm not certain this exactly came out in 2001, but fuck it, no one seems to own it or know about it, so it's new to you. They did a good split with GREEN APPLE QUICKSTEP—whoops, sorry—the BRIEFS, and then rerecorded these songs for their own CD. These luded-out versions on this self-released EP rule over the CD takes. Great snot-bubble heavy-lidded beep-boop-punk, and one butt-ugly sleeve to boot.

ELECTRIC EELS - "Eyeballs of Hell" 2xLP (Scat)
Not much point in putting a reissue in a Top Ten, but there was so much unreleased stuff on this collection I'm making an exception. Many more cover opportunities for all you Wednesday-night-opening arty-punk bands! If you buy one mid-70s Cleveland punk reissue this decade...

MOORAT FINGERS - "I Don' t Know" EP (self-released?)
The best European garage-punk-whatever 7" I heard all year. Fantastic catchy power.

REGISTRATORS - "Singles" LP (Rip Off)
When you hear all the 45s together, it adds up to the best Japanese band of the 90's. 'Cause they wrote better songs than TEENGENERATE. Which puts nothing over on the amazing FIRESTARTER CD that no one can find.

A FRAMES - "Neutron Bomb" EP (Dragnet)
Continuing the year-long trend toward the "return to fuzz," this is the best "catchy noise" band around. They did another 7" on the SS label outta Sacto (this one is on their own Dragnet) that could trade places with this one, both are top-shelf drugs-without-the-drugs speedo-creedos.

SIGHTINGS - s/t EP (Freedom From)
The return of art-noise instincts to the "punk" scene, thankfully bereft of emo shrieking or metal-hardcore posing. Just great fucked up "arty" punk that leaves you scratching your head and wishin' for a full-length. Their label Freedom From is really pushing things forward as well, putting out countless head-fucked cassettes by the likes of FUKKTRON, NOXAGT, and PENCILNECK, as well as the envinylization of the legendary (?) REYNOLS. Their stuff is personal, aggressive, weird, and thoroughly dislocated and out-of-time. The new Blackjack, anyone?

INTIMATE FAGS - "Lightning Speed" EP (Freaked Out Frequencies)
Their LP on Rip Off was good an' all, but this...*this* is the sound that all the power-pop wannabees are straining to achieve, the perfect mix of power, playing and speed without sappy sugary production gloss. I played this monster for Sean the Pop Man, and his head snapped around in that "Yeah, yeah, that's it!" kind of way. No shit, you could slip this sucker onto a 70s powerpop comp and it would start showing up on Italian want lists. Amazing 45. The Japanese call it again.

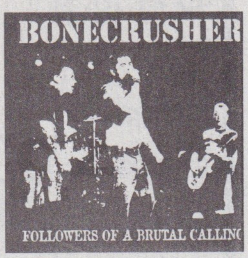
CUTS - s/t LP (Rock 'N Roll Blitzkrieg)
All noise and no songs makes Jack a dull boy. This is nothing like the nervous energy 7" they did for Lookout a few years back; this one mines the early 70s indie-garage circuit and the proto-power-pop flavors that invested the Bomp-era bands of '76 and beyond. There is a psych undercurrent as well in the rave-up sections, especially on "Get Rid of Him." The full-flower cover may be offputting, but this is full-on mid-70s FLAMIN' GROOVIES worship/teleportation of the highest water. And a great year for the label, Rock ' N Roll Blitzkrieg!

Honorable Mention
FLAKES - "Wanna Meet?" EP
BLUTT - "Bip Bam Boom" EP
SUPERHELICOPTER (Ltd.) - any record
PIRANHAS - "Dictating Machine" EP
V/A - "No One Left to Blame" LP
COMETS ON FIRE - s/t LP

There were a lot of great records this year, more than a Top Ten can hold. Hardcore finally ditched some of its metal-technical-grind bullshit, or at least enough bands did that I could actually *like* some of the first decent non-thrash hardcore in over 15 years. About time. There was a rush of no-hope garage-leveldopery that brought to mind past greats like the RIBCAGE WRESTLERS, SOLGER, the "Process of Elimination" comp and early BAD BRAINS. I didn't put any in my Top Ten because I know they're gonna show up elsewhere but let me just say JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS, thank you.

One continuing annoyance is the impossibility of getting any new Japanese power-pop or punk records into the States, or anywhere else for that matter. I don't see 'em on European lists, or even on frickin' eBay. So no FIRESTARTER records for most of us. I had to beg my copy off a Japan-bound Mike Lucas, and friends, that ain't distribution. So, my request for the new year is that someone pound some sense into the Japanese Mangrove label and get them to get their stuff out so people can actually hear it! Or at least answer emails! One positive trend was the final death of the "Killed By Death" moniker as a standard of quality, done in by Euro mediocrity. The new standard for ungodly-rare 70s punk comps was set by the "No One Left to Blame" LP, which had some seriously great stuff on it and now carries the torch set by the earlier volumes. Thanks, stranger.

The trend towards great singles that started in 1999 reached full power in 2001. Indie/punk singles were almost made irrelevant in the mid-90s as bands would record eight songs and toss 'em off to four different labels as scene-making bargaining chips. Those of us trying to figure out whether we should buy this single or that one were left searching for the 45 with the "two great songs," bought the B-team crap at random, and then gave up on the band. Or, the 7" was simply a glorified demo for ladder-climbing frauds desperate to sell out to anyone with a checkbook. Dully flipping through an endless stack of "concept" 45s became a chore. The gradual implosion of 7" sales took care of the 7" release glut, and the single-as-demo has largely (thankfully) been erased by CDRs and the overall cheapness of CD production versus 45s. All of which has cleared the way for a run of great garage/arty/punky/whatever 45s not seen since the early days of the 90s. Anyone who puts out their own 45 these days is generally doing it for the right reasons, which is to put your *best* songs onto a flippable-repeatable-objet-d'art. Shit, yes. Overall, this last year was the strongest for across-the-board punk rock since the early 80s. Go SIGHTINGS, go A-FRAMES!
—Ryan



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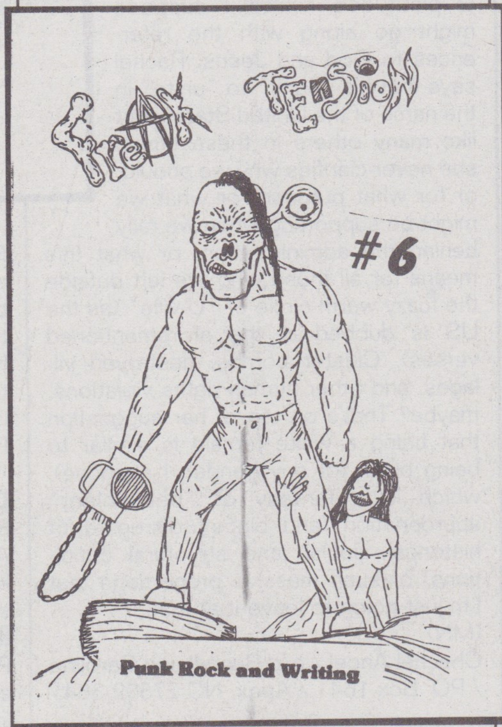
ZINES

Reviews by: (AC) Arwen Curry, (AR) Aragorn, (KC) Karoline Collins, (MD) Mikel Delgado, (SD) Sarah Double-Ears, (GF) Gardner Fusuhara, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (JM) Jeff Mason, (JL) Jennifer L. Mushnick, (NN) Nellie Nelson, (MN) Mimi Nguyen, (CR) Casey Ress, (DS) Denise Scilingo, (MT) Mike Thorn, (GZ) Gordon Zola.

Please send your zine in for review. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and post paid price. If you want us to include a foreign post paid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

ALTERNATIV' ZINE #11 / 15ff
8.25 x 11.75 - copied - 36 pgs - French
One reason, of many, why it's important and rewarding to connect to punks in other parts of the world is that it can force us to deconstruct the aesthetic cocoons we build around different aspects of punk culture. This zine, for example, doesn't look like much at first glance, but it's packed with subversive ideas, interviews with obscure French crust bands, and various other resources for punks, anarchists, and those who emulate them. I appreciated the simple cut-and-paste of the interviews, but I could do without all the reprints from pamphlets. Depending on the political landscape in their town, however, the editors may be performing a needed service by collecting this information in one place. There's musical coverage in here as well, mostly of the local variety. (AC)
Le Bokal / 3 Rue Lazare Carnot / 01000 Bqurg En Bresse / France

AMERICA? #9 / $1
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 32 pgs
I'd have to say that reading *America?* absolutely made my fucking day! If you have ever been on tour, or just roamed the country in a stinky vehicle full of friends you will love this as much as I do. Definitely a personal journal type zine (as always, my favorite kind) but oh-so-extra good! No bittersweet tragic moments in here...just page after page of positive, inspiring energy and thoughts. Hmm...that kind of makes it sound like a straight edge song, eh?! I mean the positive energy you get from breaking down in Gallup, NM and instead of it being the end of the world, you absorb your surroundings, chew it over in your mind, savor it and share it with someone else. Punk houses, exploring cities, Florida, cooking food with friends, eating peanut butter with a ballpoint pen on the side of the road, being a good house guest and washing the fucking dishes 'cuz it's the right thing to do, small shows, having no regrets, public libraries, soy milk for your coffee, the satisfying feel of words on your tongue, being eager and awkward and living life to the fullest. These are just some of the gems I culled from



America?...I'm certain that you will find much more between the pages of this little treasure. I'm going to order this (and some back issues) today, why don't you do the same?! (KC)
Travis / PO Box 13077 / Gainesville, FL 32604-1077

ANARCHY Vol. 19, #2 / $4.95
8.5 x 11 - printed - 84 pgs
This "Journal of Desire Armed" is much better than when I last read it and it seemed all the articles were either impenetrably situationist or about fucking children (yes, I know that's an exaggeration). The focus on book and zine reviewing is positive, and the review of the Crimethinc book in particular is excellent. Also contains good articles on Urban Guerrillas in Canada (part 2), infiltration and arrest of the Germinal collective, secret history of fugitives and runaways in the early days of American colonialization, and a continuation of the debate on primitivism. Still, there's a lingering unease I have with this magazine, a misanthropy that seeps through the pages just often enough to cause worry. For example, in the last minute opening essay, the issue is dedicated to all "comrades" in the New York area (despite the fact the editor says he knows of none directly affected by the 9/11 events) as opposed to, say, the people of New York. (GZ)
C.A.L. Press / PO Box 1446 / Columbia MO 65205-1446
www.anarchymag.org

ARROWEB #5.1 / 2 stamps or trade
7 x 8.5 - copied - 24 pgs
I'm sure the editor's friends will appreciate these in-jokes and bare-bones versions of stories they've already heard. Everyone else can safely pass. (JM)
117 Sturbridge Rd / Clarks Summit, PA 18411-1067

BANAL EXISTENCE #1 / $1
8.5 x 11 - copied - 29 pgs
A hardcore fanzine with a slap-dash layout, this formulaic first issue has room to grow. I think it's always a bad sign if the first page of content is a reprint of a *New York Times* advertisement by the Human Farming Association, if only because it hints at editorial laziness. A lone columnist suggests that more women need to participate in punk rock, and chastises the ladies for not putting the effort into "scene," but doesn't explore why there aren't "enough" women involved in the first place. (I'm going to leave that one alone because I'm tired of this debate.) I'm only vaguely familiar with the bands

interviewed (Razed, Toxic Narcotic, and Dirty Rotten Imbeciles), of which the Razed interview showed the most promise. A few record reviews, show reviews, and the requisite vegan recipes fill up the other pages of this thin issue.
(MN)
2706 Harvard Ave E / Seattle, WA 98102

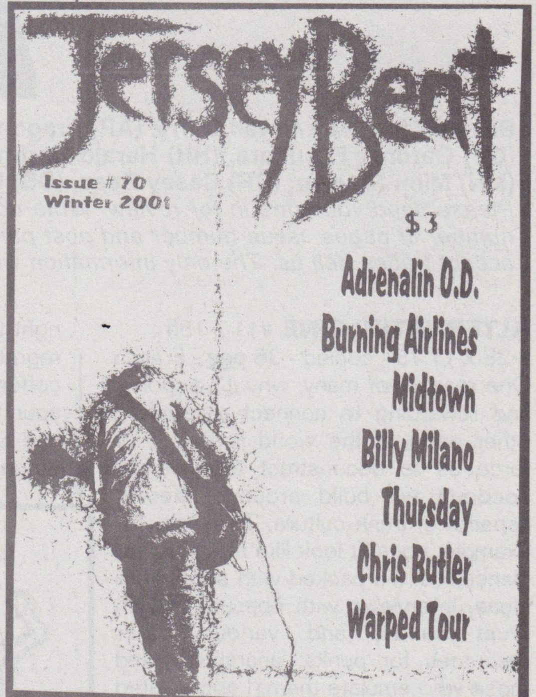
BARRICADA #10,11 / $15 for 6 issues
8.5 x 11 - copied - 20 pgs
Barricada is a year-old project from the Barricada Collective, which has actually printed ten issues of their magazine so far. They have an explicitly class-conscious and "organizationalist" politic, and are supporting members of NEFAC (the North Eastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists). The magazine is reminiscent of the *Love and Rage* publication, in that it appears to highlight "riot-porn" (lots of pictures of posturing black clad rally attendees and cops) and topical news stories. Where it differs (for the better) is in its inclusion of approachable essays. Number 10 includes a very interesting reading of the Crimethinc phenomenon and the book *Evasion* in particular. It also includes three challenging essays on anarchist organization that help frame the debate. (AR)
PO Box 73 / Boston, MA 02133

BEEF # 1 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 24 pgs
This is a nice first effort, if a little run of the mill. It's name relates to complaints, substance, and dead animals—likewise there are a lot of gripes about shit in this world: animal and ecological abuse, junkmail, racism, as well as some positive bits. The editor is starting a womyns' zine collective, so contact her if you'd like to be a part of it. (MD)
Sheila Cheyenne / 3033 Barlow Rd / Navarre, FL 32566
ndenial@juno.com

THE BOOZE HOUND'S COMPANION / $11.95
5.5 x 8.5 - printed - 196 pgs
This is actually a book, but this will be a short review... The sub-title says "The world's largest collection of barroom stats, facts quips, jokes and drunken ramblings". Yeh. My response is, Why? Why waste your time putting this together, why expect people to shell out $12 for this and why, why, WHY are we reviewing this; Casey, this is not punk. Drinking can be amusing, talking about drinking is pretty boring, and reading little quips about drinking is just lame. (GF)
Crabhouse Press / PO Box 2691 / Lancaster, PA 17608

CHECHEL ANGEL #4 / $1
8.5 x 4.5 - copied - 36 pgs
Do you like your Christian zines decorated with hot pink fabric butterfly wings glued to the cover model's xeroxed back? Hmm, I didn't think so. An early 90s riot grrrl aesthetic (magazine models with cut-and-paste commentary) coupled with nervous stories about having a crush and proselytizing at shows makes for a bizarre and ultimately dull combination. Besides the questionable editorial decision to reprint Internet rumors and tedious Dr. Suess-ian patriotic verses, the political "voice" of the fanzine betrays a naïve faith in "America" and meaningless liberal platitudes, which I suppose might go along with the references to God and Jesus. Rachel says that it's "punk" to "unite" in the name of the United States, but like many others in these times, she never clarifies why we should, or for what purpose, or what we might be supporting when we rally behind the administration, or what this means for all those who are left outside the fuzzy warm circle of "U-ville" (as the US is dubbed in the aforementioned verses). Cluster bombs, destroyed villages, and other human rights violations, maybe? That's on top of her suggestion that being a white female is similar to being black (of any gender, I suppose), which is a fantasy of "benevolent" appropriation (and blatant disregard of historical, social, and structural conditions) of such massive proportions that I'm just going to leave it at that.
(MN)
Chechel Angel / c/o Rachel and Caroline / PO Box 1641 / Apex, NC 27502-3641

CHICKENHED ZINE & ROLL #3 / $2
8.5 x 7 - copied - 44 pgs
It seems to me that most people that do zines do them almost as a side project, or because they feel that they should just *do* something and music isn't an option for them. Josh, the creator of *CZAR* makes his zine because he is zine obsessed. Considering that my role in punk has always been in the world of zines I can share with him an enthusiasm that few others seem to feel. *CZAR* is a uniquely styled personal zine that doesn't play out like a boring self indulgent emo fest, but instead serves as an interesting vehicle for Josh's thoughts and experiences in the world around him. This issue contains detailed stories about quitting smoking, bisexual dads, drug addled



friends, and zines. All of them are interesting and worth reading. One of the best zines I've reviewed here in a long time, and I'm not just saying that because he says one of his dreams is to be in the top ten zine listing. Anyone this into zines is pretty fucking cool. (CR)
PO Box 330 / Richmond, VA 23218

DIMESTORE #5 / $1
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 22 pgs
Attractively screened covers in periwinkle blue and featuring a pattern of teeny steaming coffee mugs set my expectations a little too high for this one. Editor Pnanay writes with sincerity, mostly about his (or her?) life in art school, staying up late and consuming caffeine, but the only point I was able to take with me was that's it's important to stop and appreciate the simple and beautiful things in life. A fine point, for sure, but I already knew that. This has promise, but what *Dimestore* needs, I think, is some conflict— you know, some punk rock.
(AC)
10 Yellow Flax, Littleton, CO 80127

DOLL #173 / $?
12 x 8 - printed - 154 pgs
The super slick Japanese punk zine that can't be read by anyone here. This issue contains interviews with Joe Strummer (as usual), Rude Bones, The Colts, a

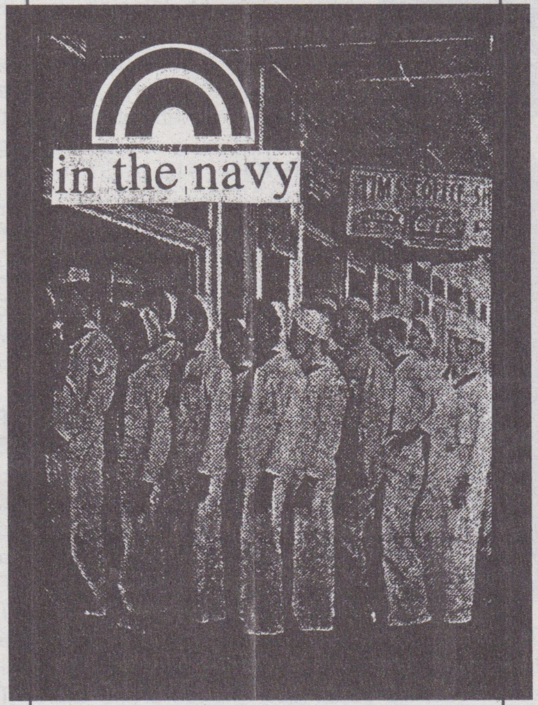
reprint of the *MRR* interview with Tragedy, and Earth Crisis (ugh!). Looks great and probably reads even better. (CR)
NO 303 Aota bldg. / 3-1-9 / Kita / Kohenji / Suginami - Ku , Tokyo

FREAK TENSION #6 / $1 or stamps
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 24 pgs
I totally recommend this zine, subtitled "Punk Rock and Writing". I'm kinda surprised actually, because judging this zine by the cover (pen and ink drawing of muscley monster with a chainsaw for an arm being almost fondled by a big breasted woman with no eyes) I cursed Casey for assigning it to me. But once I started reading, I realized this is one of the best punkish zines I've read in awhile. Mostly reviews, but not just of records and shows. For instance Matt reviews going to church for a relative's confirmation and a party at a local Harley shop. Also the reviews of bands tend to not be limited by the music: his review of Ringworm is a page on how he contracted and got rid of ringworm and a paragraph on the band. Also includes a short story about a werewolf at a hardcore festival. This is really good writing. (GZ)
Matt Johnson / PO Box 22163 / Green Bay WI 54305
Freaktension@hotmail.com

FRESH RAG #2 / $2 US / $4 world
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 52 pgs
Fuck, this girl writes good. Show reviews and feature articles of a length that'd be boring ordinarily, but easily keep your interest the whole time. I guess that's what happens when you write from passion rather than obligation, but still, it helps to have snappy writing talent. Plus, I liked the enthusiasm for and prioritizing of beer in the stories (I'm not a complete enemy of str8 stuff, but I definitely prefer the unabashed beer-fulness). Main pieces are on the 1960s girl group era, book reviews, show reviews...hell, it's all good in here. Get it, it made me want to go live in her so-called "shitty little town." (NN)
816 Baldwin Ave #1 / Norfolk, VA 23517

GREEN ANARCHY #7 / $2
12 x 16 - printed - 24 pgs
There is an amazing amount of content within this newspaper. Coming from the Eugene Anarchist Scene™, the editors include news stories on the Transforming Columbus Day rally, ELF subpoenas to Congress, International Direct Actions (over the past year), Genoa, political prisoner updates, and local updates. There is also commentary on the events of September 11, Willful Disobedience, the current Social War (waged by Power on the unwitting populace), revolutionary consciousness, and the Maori people. The piece critical of Willful Disobedience is particularly interesting, as it criticizes another member of the close West Coast anarchist "family" in a surprisingly harsh way. There is also a translation (done by Rob Thaxton, a political prisoner) of a Spanish eco-anarchist zine, *Ecotopia*, which advocates an alliance between indigenous people and anarchists that is sure to enhance discussion. Finally, *GA* does a good job of supplying information; from specific categorical listings of political prisoners to an extensive listing of "source material"—pamphlets and books—that should illuminate the radical perspectives of *GA*. (AR)
PO Box 11331/ Eugene OR 97440

IN THE NAVY #1 / $?
8.25 x 5.75 - copied - 24 pages
First off, this zine looks great. It's one of those really nicely copied hybrids of cut-and-paste and font bank, with enough graphic relief and a pleasingly choppy layout for the text. The whole effect was open and drew me in. On starting to read, however, I quickly felt suffocated



by the total candor and intensity of the writing. Editor David, Copenhagen resident, takes us through the process of carving out the different contours of his identity; as queer, as a friend, as a punk rocker, as an emerging "drag princess." He struggles with his attraction to boys, to clothes, to terrible 80s radio pop. Awkward (and almost invasive) as it felt, to read this—the pain and loneliness of some of David's experiences was a valuable reminder of the price of resisting sexual socialization. Hopefully, this zine will connect him to some like minds. (AC)
Peter Bangs Vej 198 2TV / 2000 Frederiksberg / Denmark / xgayvidx@hotmail

JERSEY BEAT #70 / $3
8.5 x 11 - printed - 150 pgs
Jim Testa's zine is a fucking institution and I have enjoyed reading it over many years. He covers lots of different types of music, including lots of indie rock and even some hip hop and folk. I'm not really into that so much, but it's interesting to read about anyway. I have to say though, that the interviews in this issue bugged me. There is a cool one with Adrenalin OD, but the rest, Midtown, Thursday, Burning Airlines Outline, Converge, had an awful lot of people talking about their "careers" and pending major label deals. Yippee. (When did all the emo stars start going solo? Will this nightmare never end?!?!) Worst of all, I had to read Billy Milano talking about how he "backs his country". "Unconditional loyalty is what you need for your country." Why do these people get into punk? Dumbfuck can say whatever he wants but I don't think I'd put it in my zine, especially without any other analysis. Anyway, there's tons in here and I'm sure most would find this a valuable resource. (GF)
418 Gregory Ave / Weehawken, NJ 07086
Jim@Jerseybeat.com

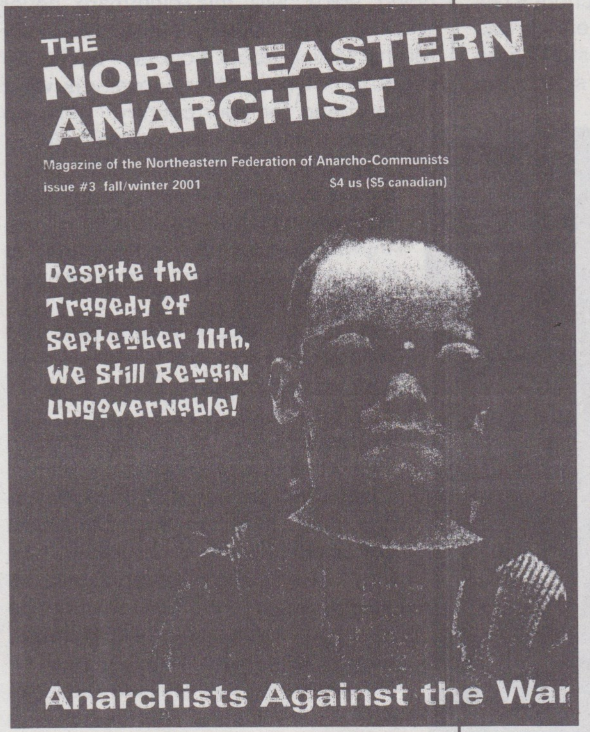
LIQUID #3 / $2
8.5 x 11 - copied - 32 pgs
Liquid is a project that focuses on punk rock heroines and the music they create. This issue features Chica Baby from the Beautys, Laura Eyeliner from the Eyeliners, Renae Bryant from All or Nothing HC, and Chick, the general manager at New Red Archives. The reviews focus on women performers. The layout is a mixture of cut-and-paste on reused content, computer garbage, and handwriting. The intention seems sincere and young. (AR)
110 Bridle Trace Ln / Madison, AL 35758

LITTLE BLACK STAR #3,4 / $?
8.5 x 11 - copied - 4 pgs
The stated goal of this paper is to be "bi-weekly agitator." The content tends

toward feeling like a mix of indymedia news stories and wry anarchist commentary on slow moving targets. While dry, this is an interesting project that will succeed if it can achieve some longevity. (AR)
Autonomous Arts Collective / 113 N Water St / Lewisburg, PA 17837

LUMIERE #4 / $1
5.5 x 4.5 - copied - 32 pgs
If your basic travel zine writer took one too many exposition classes and believed that they could write poetry, *Lumiere* would be the result. The content relies heavily on the well-worn path of the romance of hitchhiking and poverty, but throws in catchy lines like "Took the wheel in Montreal & drove all night with daydream speed & fluttering eyelids thru the countryside under galaxies & northern lights." Ugh. (AR)
2056 Headon Forest Dr / Burlington, Ontario / L7M 2M6 Canada

THE NEW SCHEME #4 / postage
8.25 x 10.75 - printed - 48 pgs
I didn't find much punk shit in here.



There's a good interview with *Tape Op* magazine and also some chats with Haymarket Riot/Divot Records, Hey Mercedes (ugh), and 31 Knots. The Fairlaines toured Europe and they report on the quality of their hotel rooms. There is a piece on America's oil dependency and the effect this has on world affairs. Don't forget ads and reviews. Even if I had the misfortune to live in Colorado, I do not think I would spend much time with *The New Scheme*. (JM)
PO Box 19873 / Boulder, CO 80308

NO-NA-MÉ #8 / $2, trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 42 pgs
Pretty simple and messy, but still fun. There is a long interview with Good Riddance, and then some brief pieces about politics in Hawaii (fucking mess). Reviews and lottsa graphics. (GF)
PO Box 12065 / Honolulu, HI 96828
DRLovePunk@juno.com

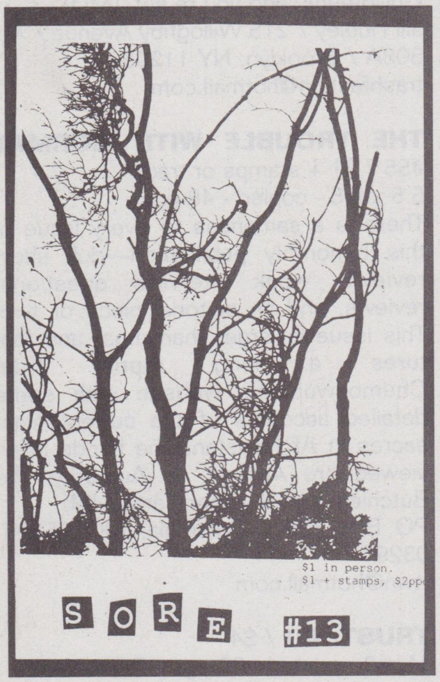
THE NORTHEASTERN ANARCHIST #3 / $4, $5 Canada
8.5 x 11 - printed - 52 pgs
This is the English language magazine for the Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists and if you're interested in anarcho-communism you should get this. It's a mix of well-written longer articles (History of "Love & Rage", Barcelona rent strike of 1931, more), theoretical analysis and (thankfully not too many) anarcho-press releases with lots of exclamation marks. Mostly rises above the militant sectarian press but not always. This issue has a special anti-war section with info on Afghanistan, The Patriot Act, Revolutionary Association of Women in Afghanistan and more. (GZ)
PO Box 230685 / Boston MA 02123
Flag.blackened.net/nefac

OBLIVION #10 / $1 or donation
8.5 x 4.5 - printed - 30 pgs
Oblivion is a wonderful zine about the politics of youth in the United States, summed up nicely in their sticker slogan, "Don't treat me like a kid, and punish me like an adult." The articles are well-written and researched accounts of due process rights for youth, California's Proposition 21 (a ballot measure which capitalized on the criminalization on youth of color), the politics of the corporate Channel One in public schools, and so much more. There are engaging editorials about peer pressure and bullies, the "manufactured crisis" of violent kids learning from violent media, and a wonderful essay by Mike Males (author of *The Scapegoat Generation* and *Framing Youth*) about the fallacy of the "good old days" the elder generation always talk about. There is also a report from a Youth Liberation Conference in Portland, which contains what little I had a problem with, namely, some of the theory behind "youth liberation" as a movement. For instance, the suggestion that "young people" are "naturally resistant to subordination and submission," and "can see an institution for what it is." This is a romantic, idealistic view of youth as having, somehow, better access to "the truth"—but this trope of wisdom or truth "out of the mouths of babes" is used all across the political spectrum to justify any particular view. I mean, President Bush read from a letter (allegedly) from a nine year-old girl who willingly gave her daddy to the government to "fight for America" to justify the bombing campaign in Afghanistan. I think an analysis of youth and what it means, and what it's made to mean, needs to be more complex. But hey, that's one reason to get this zine and get involved in the debate. A great endeavor, all around. (MN)
Oblivion / PO Box 95227 / Seattle, WA 98145
http://www.oblivion.net

ODD ONES OUT #1 / $1, 2 stamps, or trade
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 20 pgs
Editor Eric Hernandez' "premiere issue" is pretty sparse, but it has potential. I enjoyed the essay on "why 'Queer'?" and the interview with Ryan Revenge—though I don't know who he is, he tells an good story about coming out. The band interviews, with The Mooney Suzuki and J-Majesty, could has been better selected to fit the tone of the zine, and I would have like to see more writing from Eric himself, but it's a fair first effort. (AC)
Eric H. / 7608 Bright Ave. Apt F / Whittier, CA 90602 / oddonesout@hotmail.com

PICK YOUR POISON #2 / $1
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 46 pgs
I was grateful to once again be entertained by the narrative style and panache of this zine after reading the first issue and the "Cholesterol Junkie Companion," also written by the author. The theme of this issue is "things you did at an early age that make you feel rebellious, then years later make you cringe." This is pretty self-explanatory, and these stories, mostly revolving around key players in the author's childhood and teenage antics, do not disappoint. Mostly, stories involve evading and swindling teachers, cops, and other authority figures. This is a really funny zine that I highly recom-

mend. (JL)
c/o Nate Gangelhoff / PO Box 8995 / Minneapolis, MN 55408



RAZORCAKE #5 / $3
8.5 x 11 - printed - 98 pgs
For music zine fans, I think this is one you will dig. Even though the music it covers is not really my cup of tea, the interviews are well done, and there are loads of reviews and columns. Among the bands covered: Super Chinchilla Rescue Mission, Swingin' Utters, the Pinkz, and the Beautys. (MD)
PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042
razorcake.com

RENFIELD #8 / $3
11 x 8 - copied - 52 pgs - German
Well, slick this zine isn't, just the opposite, which makes it a fun read. There are a few interviews including the bands Mad Caddies, Fun People, and Tempo Zero. There is also a great tribute to Joey Ramone, a review of junk food for parties, and of course the usual assortment of record reviews and ads. (HH)
Tim Kegler / Roonstr.88 / 50674 Cologne / Germany

SCHLEPP #1 & 2 / free
8.5 x 11 - copied - 28 pgs
Editor Brontez is a queer, black punk rocker who lives in Tennessee, but was raised in Alabama with a hardcore Christian family. Now he does this totally amateur-style photocopied zine that made me laugh out loud an average of four times per issue. Punk rock. He rarely discusses his queerness, because "1. no one EVER asks me," and two, he feels like when he does, he's accused of making his sexuality too much of an issue. Tiny cut-and-paste interviews with folks like Dean from Los Rabbis, Beth from the Gossip, Mark from Teenbeat, and Seth from...the neighborhood, are clever and sassy, never "probing," but never self-conscious or boring. If you have a past or present position in the Tennessee, Alabama, or Florida punk scenes, or you were in Blondie, you might want to check for your name on the celebrity "Make-Out Lists" that appear in each issue. (AC)
Brontez / 626 Spears Ave. / Chattanooga, TN 37405

SCUTTER #7 & 8 / $2
8.5 x 11 - copied - 20 pages
I really enjoyed both issues of Scutter zine. Editor Rudy's totally fourth-grade, photo-collage and gluestick layout works well with his faithful recipe for zine content. He interviews individuals in queer and girl-oriented bands that come through his town, and despite asking different people the same questions, manages to elicit useful responses from most of them. His talent for brevity, and for picking the right personalities to showcase, gives Scutter a very welcoming,

human feel. In #7, Rudy (who is Latino) interviews three Latino queer punks: Martin (Limp Wrist), Robert Lopez (El Vez), and Luis Illades (Pansy Division). In issue #8, Rudy (who is big) writes about his admiration for big, booty-shaking Gossip frontwoman Beth Ditto. I appreciate how he uses the zine to explore elements of himself, while making connections with people he truly relates to, instead of aligning blankly with a predescribed identity. He also embraces women and girls without a trace of condescension. Although his written analyses seem over-simple, his emotional intelligence is articulate enough. (AC)
c/o Rudy / PO Box 3247 / Alhambra, CA 91803

SHAZZBUTT #7 / $1
5.5 x 8 - copied - 32 pgs
The cover of *Shazzbutt* pretty much sums up the whole issue. You will find an article about playing dodge ball, an interview with The Honor System and a totally pointless spoof (at least I hope it's a spoof) on the trials and tribulations of being a 14 year old girl. Throw in a few pieces on learning from homeless/mentally ill people, some record reviews, a few photos, a bit of heartbreak and you're done. The writing style isn't half bad, but there just wasn't enough continuity for me. Everything felt kind of slapped together and forced. Perhaps I'd feel differently if I had seen previous issues...but to be honest, this just didn't do anything for me. (KC)
Mark / 5413 S 6th Ave / Countryside, IL 60525

SHOVE IT! #1 / $1
5.5 x 5.5 - copied - 12 pages
Small, square, and subtitled: "A Comprehensive Guide to Valet Parking," this is attractive at a glance. More or less true to her word, editor Clarence spins a yarn about a crappy job parking cars. An out lesbian, she laments that the two women who run the company remain in the closet, while the slimy suburban straight boys they hire bully the other employees. Clean, cute cartoons by Sarah Brown really make this zine. Does Clarence keep the job? That's for you to find out. I found myself wishing she extrapolated more from this isolated experience, but overall I enjoyed this. (AC)
Clarence / 273-B Lexington St. / San Francisco, CA 94110

SLUG #154 / free in SLC
8.5 x 11 - printed - 48 pgs
This is a great local music resource. While the music tastes tend towards the larger venue indie scene and the beer-soaked stylings of rock, the sensibilities seem appropriate. The front inside page is covered with WTC propaganda,

including press releases from several large bands expressing their sorrow, which is unnecessarily repetitive, given our current climate, but to each their own. Also, this magazine is consistent at hiding its masthead in a half page ad that looks more appropriate for a head shop (including a skeleton and a wacky font) than for the magazine in hand. (AR)
2225 S 500 E ste 206, Salt Lake City, UT

84106

SORE #13 / $1
8.5 x 11 - copied - 40 pgs
A compilation of stories, reflections, insights, and reviews, *Sore* can be described as emo-style: heavily emotion-ladden descriptions of events and relationships that come across as very sentimental and romantic. I enjoyed a lot in this zine, including its inclusion of a few different authors in addition to the main editor. What I did not like were the thoughts of the author's friend, Mike, celebrating the religious revival, patriotism, and reverence for law enforcement since September 11. This segment of the zine is described as the "other side" of the ideological spectrum, that in all "fairness" should be represented. This myth of the unfairly represented "other side" hides the fact that we are, regardless of investments in alternative or radical media sources, steeped in dominant culture and ideology. This means that the Christian-identified, pro-war, "patriotic," side is the norm and it is everywhere, framing what is considered correct, and it does not need our "support," because it is not an endangered position. Enough of my tangent—I just found this logic incredibly fallacious and annoying, tainting what is otherwise a decent zine. (JL)
Sore Zine c/o Taylor Ball / PO Box 68711 / Virginia Beach, VA 23471

THERE ARE NO BEARS IN NEW MEXICO / $2
7 x 8 1/2 - copied - 28 pgs
I think this has to be the first time I have reviewed a children's book/zine for *MRR*. *There are no Bears in New Mexico* is written by a punk rock kindergarten teacher who tells his students about his train hopping adventures. So this book tells the tale of the authors and a friends journey on a train to a town in Colorado. The journey doesn't go that smooth when they miss their stop and wind up in New Mexico. It's a cute, short story that would make a fine bedtime story for you or any little ones. (DS)
Josh Redd / 1826 Virnankay / Ann Arbor, MI / 48103

3RD GENERATION NATION
#22 / $4
11 x 8 - printed - 80 pgs - German
This is definitely one of the best zines from Germany and if you don't think so you ain't no punk rocker. There are interviews with the bands Detox Darlings, Skeptic Eleptic, Sonic Boom Boys, and the Trashcan Darlings. There is also a tribute to Joey Ramone, plus an article on the history of the band Social Distortion. Finally there are loads of zine and record reviews, and of course the usual assortment of ads. Read this zine! (HH)
Ralf Huenebeck / Muehlenfeld 59 / 45472 Muelheim / Germany

TRASH FACTION #3 / $1 or free in NYC
8.5 x 11 - copied - 40 pgs
I like zines with a sense of humor. Especially in a music zine, humor is important. The editor focuses lots on the local scene, giving lots of coverage and support to NYC bands. It's really cool to see some punk rock history (in light of all the retro books out these days) on some smaller names—like how Rip Off Records started, and biographies on Tina Peel and the Offbeats—little tiny nuggets of scenes that might otherwise be swept under the rug. Plus there's a rad punk/rock family tree with hundreds of bands and names (and by the way, you should take this idea further—there's tons more bands that could be added to this) Add to this some reviews and interviews (Kill-A-Watts and Fatal Flying Guilloteens) and you're set. (MD)
Jill Hubley / 215 Willoghby Avenue / Apt 308A / Brooklyn, NY 11205
trashfaction@hotmail.com

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL
#55 / $1 + stamps or trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 48 pgs
There is a sameness to every issue of this bimonthly publication—dull show reviews, weak interview questions, reviews, and an editorial piece or two. This issue is larger than most and features a long reprint from Chumbawumba's website with some detailed accounts of the current massacres in Afghanistan. The bands interviewed are Against All Authority, the Butchies, and Slumber Party. (JM)
PO Box 329 / Columbia, MO 65205-0329
ttwn@hotmail.com

TRUST #91 / $4
11 x 8 - printed - 68 pgs - German
Another excellent issue of this long running German zine. This issue includes interviews with the bands Robocop Kraus, Foetus, Minus and Hillside. There is also a great in depth article on the WTO protests in Genoa, Italy, where a protester was murdered by the police, and hundreds of others were viciously beaten up. Finally there are the usual assortment of columns, record reviews, ads and of course a fantastic gig listing. (HH)
Dolf Hermannstaedter / Postfach 110762 / 28087 Bremen / Germany
www.trust-zine.de

UP MAGAZINE #1 / $5
11 x 8 - printed - 44 pgs - Dutch
One thing I've noticed over the years is that Dutch zines are mostly printed on good stock paper which for better, or worst gives these zines a slick, professional feel. This is one of those zines. Anyway, this premier issue has interviews with Henry Rollins, The Real McKenzies, No Use For A Name, International Noise Conspiracy, Maximum Penalty, Electric Frankenstein, and others. There is also plenty of good record reviews and ads. Finally the damn thing comes with a CD sampler of the bands interviewed, which has a few good cuts on it, although nothing that is a total rave. (HH)
Postbus 4269 / 5604 EG Eindhoven / Netherlands

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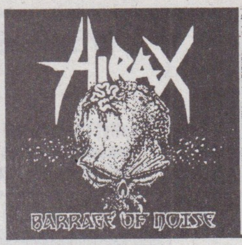

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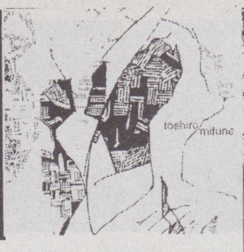
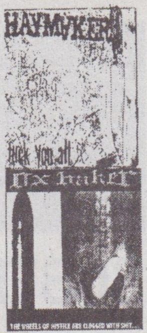


Toshiro Mifune
7" limited press DS-31



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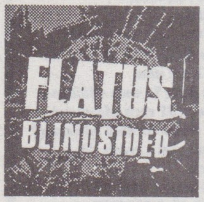
split 7"
DS-33



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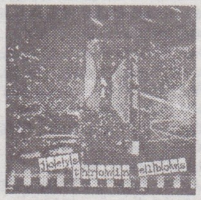

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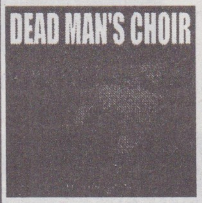

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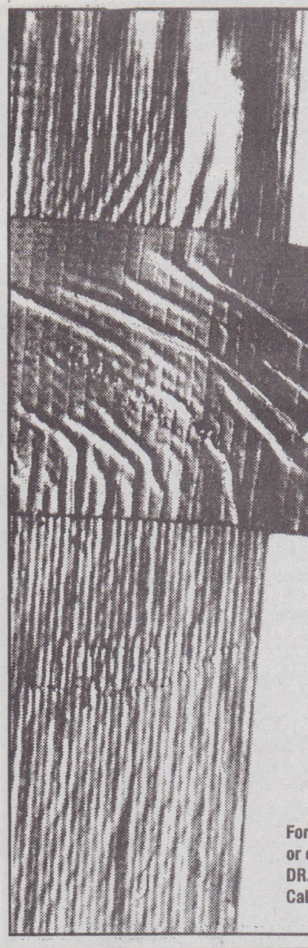

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1. analysis

WARD CHURCHILL 'DOING TIME: THE POLITICS OF IMPRISONMENT'
G7020 CD
OUT NOW!

"We don't have to worry about whether we will have a political police either in the United States or Canada. We've had them for a long time ... It's not a question of how to prevent it, it's a question of how to deal with it since it is an existent reality." -- Ward Churchill, from the CD.

The U.S. government has used all means to subvert and neutralize movements for social change. This lecture focuses on the FBI's counter intelligence programs, their use in undermining dissent and the criminal justice system's role as an agent of social control.

Ward Churchill is co-director of the **American Indian Movement** of Colorado, Vice Chairperson of the **American Anti-Defamation Council**, and a National Spokesperson for the **Leonard Peltier Defense Committee.**

2. action

BAKUNIN'S BUM 'FIGHT TO WIN!'
G7021 CD
OUT NOW
A Benefit for the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty

This album takes a passionate, inspirational speech from two OCAP anti-poverty activists (Sean Brandt & Sue Collis) and edits it into 11 spoken word pieces with radical beats & strings by "Bakunin's Bum" -- 1 Speed Bike (from **godspeed you black emperor! & exhaust**) and Norman Nawrocki (from **Rhythm Activism & Da Zoque!**). The result: a powerful, 69 minute mix of music & ideas about how to step up local resistance to the effects of globalized misery.

The words from the OCAP activists offer a fresh perspective on how to combat growing poverty in the face of abundance; about how to confront & challenge an insensitive, uncaring, police-dependent, State apparatus; and about how to work with others, in community organizations, using "direct action" approaches, uncompromisingly, to "fight to win".

CDs are $12 ppd. Write to **G7 Welcoming Committee Records** | P.O. Box 27006, C - 360 Main Street | Winnipeg, MB | R3C 4T3 | Canada
Full catalogue of radical music and spoken word and secure online ordering at http://www.g7welcomingcommittee.com

HONEY BEAR RECORDS

ANARCHY IN THE UK

As some of you may already know, I'm in the process of collecting interviews and information for a series of articles and subsequent book focused on the so-called anarcho punk scene of the late '70s and early '80s.

Were you there?

Were you in one of the bands?

Any help and/or information would be greatly appreciated. Here are a few of the bands I'm still trying to track down: Six Minute War / The Fallout, D&V, Null & Void (Andy Stratton), The Apostles (Andy Martin), Polemic Attack, The Sears, The Naked, Part 1, Assassins Of Hope, No Defences, Tears Of Destruction, Dominant Patri, Earth's Epitaph, A Touch Of Hysteria, Apf Brigade, Anarka And Poppy, Kultur Kampf, Look Mummy Clowns, Hagar The Womb/We Are Going To Eat You, Liberty, Exit Stance, The Waste, Fiend, Hysteria Ward, The Review...

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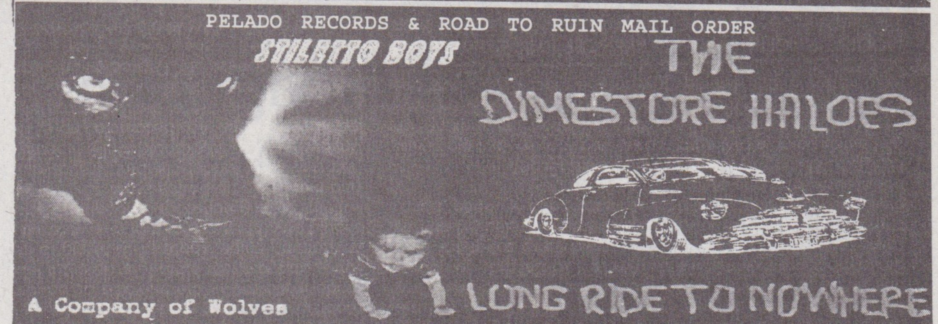

The STILETTO BOYS "A Company Of Wolves" Brand new full length CD available now, also vinyl version on High Society Records available via Pelado Records. The Stiletto Boys are the bastard child of the Dickies, Dead Boys, Descendents, Cheap Trick, Foo Fighters, 77 Punk & 79 Power Pop all mixed into one great band! The CD and LP have completely different names and art work but are the same songs.

The DIMESTORE HALOES "Long Ride To Nowhere" CD This great Boston band just recently broke up after a six year fun. Once again the Haloes deliver their brand of real authentic punk rock. Influenced by the greats of 57, 73 and 77 Haloes always stayed true to the ideals of true punk rock!! Leapord print creepers, leather jackets and eyeliner!! Look for The DISARRAY GUNS coming from the ashes of the Haloes very soon!

DON'T MISS OUT ON THE GREAT NEW 7' BY: The STUPOR STARS 4 songs of 2 minute greatness from ex-members of the Stalions (NYC). Fans of bands like Loli and The Chones, Bobbyteens etc. will want to pick this up!

TEEN COOL "Adolessons" CD/EP is another one you don't want to miss out on. Snotty Texas Punk Rock full of attitude that you come to expect from Texas, they are the kids of the 77 American and UK Punk!

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ANTI-MODERN FOUNDATION Worried about the future? Do you dare to be different? Can you think for yourself? Then read The Resurrection of Aristocracy by Rudolph C. Evans, $12.95, Breakout Productions. For a copy of a review and more information contact RC Evans, 8 Cliff Ave., Hempstend NY 11550.

VLAD THE IMPALER Ultra rare Romanian (subtitled in English) film which depicts the true life story of the real (historical) Dracula. $14.00 cash, check or money order. James McElroy, PO Box 793, Vinemont, AL 35179

BLACK MARKET FETUS: New 7" out this month! Looking for distro's/bands overseas to trade 5 or more copies of There Grind/ Crust/ Sludge/ DIY releases. Wholesale rates also available. Contact: PO Box 3101, Des Moines, IA 50314, U$A. FETTUSFACE@aol.com.

HEY! MORONS, write to Proud to be Idiot Records for stuff by Hellstompter, Spider Babies, Henry Fiats Open Sore, Dead Kings, Grabbies, Hammerlock, and much more. 1866 McAllister St., SF, CA 94115, www.ptbi.8m.com.

TRADE/SALE : Fuck Ups "FU 82" EP, Faith/Void split LP (1st pressing), Marginal Man 1st LP, Battalion of Saints "2nd Coming" LP, Rebel Truth 7" (Version Sound), Napalm Death "Scum" LP, Cleanse the Bacteria LP. Wants: ZMIV 7", Bad Posture 12", Amebix "Winter" 7", Decry 7", Execute "HC Temptation" 7", etc. (Late 70's/early 80's stuff). Send trade lists or cash offers to: Bill Skoulas, Poste Restante, Eolou 100, 10200 Athens, Greece (or email me at: milsain@hotmail.com).

IN REAL NEED of friendly human contact. 30, 5'10", 175, brown/brown, white, body builder. I've been away from the 'real' world 15 years with no end in sight. I'll answer all who done write. Could use a smile, could you? Robert Blake, AJ1735, RD #10, Box 10, Greensburg, PA 15601.

ROMANTIC ROCKER. Locked down and lonely. Tall and handsome, a little bad, a little freaky, a lot sweet. Sometimes serious, mostly fun. Seeking ladypal with heart and bright mind for friendship, maybe more. Marritte Funches #37050, POB 1989, Ely, NV 89301.

LOOKING FOR CORRESPONDENCE with people from the Bay Area/East Bay for connections that can help me get me on my feet. I am relocating in summer '03. Looking for pen pals. 21 year old male interested in activism, collecting junk, photography, and writing. Please contact at - Stu Love, 240 E. Kline Ave., Lansford, PA 18232

STAY ALL OVER THE WORLD FOR FREE. The World for Free was started by a touring band to help with accommodations in people's houses. Since then it's grown to over 250 members. You don't have to be in a band! If you like people more than hotels, find out about THE WORLD FOR FREE. $20 a year membership. For information write to: THE WORLD FOR FREE, PO Box 137-M, Prince Street Station, New York NY 10012, USA. Email: info@worldforfree.com or via the web: http://www.worldforfree.com

JAP '80S HC VHS (all official releases). Confuse "Live", Gism "Performance", Kuro "1985.8.15 Gig", Gauze "ACC", Ghoul "Last Gig", Subg. Ego & Chopped (from LD!), Outo "Live (on Selfish Rec.)", SDS "Live (on MCR)". $12/$15 PPD each. Japcore Video, 3736 West Diversy, Chicago, IL 60647

29 YEAR OLD PRISONER I'd just like to exchange thoughts and ideas...Nothing slimy. I do a zine and prefer punk/hc music. Don't know what else to add...Dave Gurz, EB1596, Rd 10 Box 10, Greensburg, PA 15601.

THE STRAP-ONS PIMPS RIP 7" with songs like "Prom Mom" and "Wetty Beddy" for only $4 postage paid. Send to Underground Medicine, PO Box 5075, Milford CT 06460. How many will wake up and die before they realize. www.thestrap-ons.com.

FREE CD! Green Flem & the Nasty Maggots 'Nasty Hits'. Includes the megahit "My Hairy Back" send $1 for postage to PO Box 799 Enfield CT 06083.

SKATEBOARD VIDEOS looking for people to trade with. Send me a copy of what you have and choose the same amount of footage from me. Over 300 videos to choose from. Joey Bosse, 51702-3, Karankawa Cir., Fort Hood, TX 76544.

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